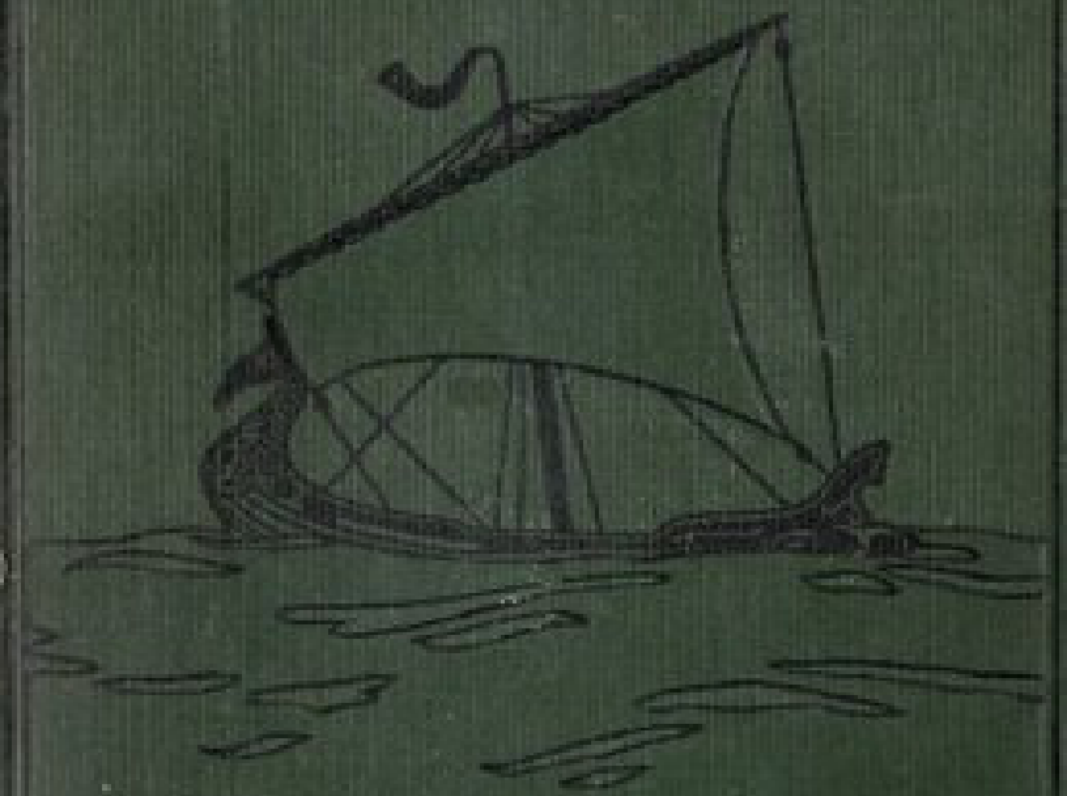
From Sea to Sea



Rudyard Kipling

SHOUT
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Annotation

This collection of notes and essays on Kipling's world travels reveals a man bursting with self-deprecating wit, keen observational powers, and an intelligent awareness of his own cultural biases and prejudices. First published in 1899, this volume serves as a delightful reminder of Kipling's genius.

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From Sea to Sea
Letters of Travel
Rudyard Kipling

Preface

In these two volumes I have got together the bulk of the special correspondence and occasional articles written by me for the *Civil and Military Gazette* and the *Pioneer* between 1887–1889. I have been forced to this action by the enterprise of various publishers who, not content with disinterring old newspaper work from the decent seclusion of the office files, have in several instances seen fit to embellish it with additions and interpolations.

RUDYARD KIPLING.

Part I
Letters of Marque

I
Of the Beginning of Things. of the Taj and the Globe-trotter. the Young Man From Manchester and Certain Moral Reflections

Nov.–Dec., 1887

Except for those who, under compulsion of a sick certificate, are flying Bombaywards, it is good for every man to see some little of the great Indian Empire and the strange folk who move about it. It is good to escape for a time from the House of Rimmon—be it office or cutchery—and to go abroad under no more exacting master than personal inclination, and with no more definite plan of travel than has the horse, escaped from pasture, free upon the countryside. The first result of such freedom is extreme bewilderment, and the second reduces the freed to a state of mind which, for his sins, must be the normal portion of the Globe–trotter—the man who "does" kingdoms in days and writes books upon them in weeks. And this desperate facility is not as strange as it seems. By the time that an Englishman has come by sea and rail *via* America, Japan, Singapur, and Ceylon, to India, he can—these eyes have seen him do so—master in five minutes the intricacies of the *Indian Bradshaw*, and tell an old resident exactly how and where the trains run. Can we wonder that the intoxication of success in hasty assimilation should make him overbold, and that he should try to grasp—but a full account of the insolent Globe–trotter must be reserved. He is worthy of a book. Given absolute freedom for a month, the mind, as I have said, fails to take in the situation and, after much debate, contents itself with following in old and well–beaten ways—paths that we in India have no time to tread, but must leave to the country cousin who wears his *pagri* tail–fashion down his back, and says "cabman" to the driver of the *ticca–ghari*.

Now, Jeypore from the Anglo–Indian point of view is a station on the Rajputana–Malwa line, on the way to Bombay, where half an hour is allowed for dinner, and where there ought to be more protection from the sun than at present exists. Some few, more learned than the rest, know that garnets come from Jeypore, and here the limits of our wisdom are set. We do not, to quote the Calcutta shopkeeper, come out "for the good of our 'ealth," and what touring we accomplish is for the most part off the line of rail.

For these reasons, and because he wished to study our winter birds of passage, one of the few thousand Englishmen in India on a date and in a place which have no concern with the story, sacrificed

all his self–respect and became—at enormous personal inconvenience —a Globe–trotter going to Jeypore, and leaving behind him for a little while all that old and well–known life in which Commissioners and Deputy–Commissioners, Governors and Lieutenant–Governors, Aides–de–camp, Colonels and their wives, Majors, Captains, and Subalterns after their kind move and rule and govern and squabble and fight and sell each other's horses and tell wicked stories of their neighbours. But before he had fully settled into his part or accustomed himself to saying, "Please take out this luggage," to the coolies at the stations, he saw from the train the Taj wrapped in the mists of the morning.

There is a story of a Frenchman who feared not God, nor regarded man, sailing to Egypt for the express purpose of scoffing at the Pyramids and—though this is hard to believe—at the great Napoleon who had warred under their shadow. It is on record that that blasphemous Gaul came to the Great Pyramid and wept through mingled reverence and contrition; for he sprang from an emotional race. To understand his feelings it is necessary to have read a great deal too much about the Taj, its design and proportions; to have seen execrable pictures of it at the Simla Fine Arts Exhibition, to have had its praises sung by superior and travelled friends till the brain loathed the repetition of the word; and then, sulky with want of sleep, heavy–eyed, unwashed, and chilled, to come upon it suddenly. Under these circumstances everything, you will concede, is in favour of a cold, critical, and not too impartial verdict. As the Englishman leaned out of the carriage he saw first an opal–tinted cloud on the horizon, and, later, certain towers. The mists lay on the ground, so that the Splendour seemed to be floating free of the earth; and the mists rose in the background, so that at no time could everything be seen clearly. Then as the train sped forward, and the mists shifted, and the sun shone upon the mists, the Taj took a hundred new shapes, each perfect and each beyond description. It was the Ivory Gate through which all good dreams come; it was the realization of "the gleaming halls of dawn" that Tennyson sings of; it was veritably the "aspiration fixed," the "sigh made stone" of a lesser poet; and, over and above concrete comparisons, it seemed the embodiment of all things pure, all things holy, and all things unhappy. That was the mystery of the building! It may be that the mists wrought the witchery, and that the Taj seen in the dry sunlight is only, as guide–books say, a noble structure. The Englishman could not tell, and has made a vow that he will never go nearer the spot, for fear of breaking the charm of the unearthly pavilions.

It may be, too, that each must view the Taj for himself with his own eyes, working out his own interpretation of the sight. It is certain that no man can in cold blood and colder ink set down his impressions

if he has been in the least moved.

To the one who watched and wondered that November morning the thing seemed full of sorrow—the sorrow of the man who built it for the woman he loved, and the sorrow of the workmen who died in the building—used up like cattle. And in the face of this sorrow the Taj flushed in the sunlight and was beautiful, after the beauty of a woman who has done no wrong.

Here the train ran in under the walls of Agra Fort, and another train—of thought incoherent as that written above—came to an end. Let those who scoff at overmuch enthusiasm look at the Taj and thenceforward be dumb. It is well on the threshold of a journey to be taught reverence and awe.

But there is no reverence in the Globe–trotter: he is brazen. A Young Man from Manchester was travelling to Bombay in order—how the words hurt!—to be home by Christmas. He had come through America, New Zealand, and Australia, and finding that he had ten days to spare at Bombay, conceived the modest idea of "doing India." "I don't say that I've done it all; but you may say that I've seen a good deal." Then he explained that he had been "much pleased" at Agra; "much pleased" at Delhi; and, last profanation, "very much pleased" at the Taj. Indeed, he seemed to be going through life just then "much pleased" at everything. With rare and sparkling originality he remarked that India was a "big place," and that there were many things to buy. Verily, this Young Man must have been a delight to the Delhi boxwallahs. He had purchased shawls and embroidery "to the tune of" a certain number of rupees duly set forth, and he had purchased jewellery to another tune. These were gifts for friends at home, and he considered them "very Eastern." If silver filigree work modelled on Palais Royal patterns, or aniline blue scarves be Eastern, he had succeeded in his heart's desire. For some inscrutable end it had been decreed that man shall take a delight in making his fellow–man miserable. The Englishman began to point out gravely the probable extent to which the Young Man from Manchester had been swindled, and the Young Man said: "By Jove! You don't say so? I hate being done. If there's anything I hate, it's being done!"

He had been so happy in the thought of "getting home by Christmas," and so charmingly communicative as to the members of his family for whom such and such gifts were intended, that the Englishman cut short the record of fraud and soothed him by saying that he had not been so very badly "done," after all. This consideration was misplaced, for, his peace of mind restored, the Young Man from Manchester looked out of the window and, waving his hand over the Empire generally, said: "I say. Look here. All those wells are wrong, you know!" The wells were on the wheel and inclined plane system;

but he objected to the incline, and said that it would be much better for the bullocks if they walked on level ground. Then light dawned upon him, and he said: "I suppose it's to exercise all their muscles. Y' know a canal horse is no use after he has been on the tow–path for some time. He can't walk anywhere but on the flat, y' know, and I suppose it's just the same with bullocks." The spurs of the Aravalis, under which the train was running, had evidently suggested this brilliant idea which passed uncontradicted, for the Englishman was looking out of the window.

If one were bold enough to generalise after the manner of Globe–trotters, it would be easy to build up a theory on the well incident to account for the apparent insanity of some of our cold weather visitors. Even the Young Man from Manchester could evolve a complete idea for the training of well–bullocks in the East at thirty seconds' notice. How much the more could a cultivated observer from, let us say, an English constituency, blunder and pervert and mangle? We in this country have no time to work out the notion, which is worthy of the consideration of some leisurely Teuton intellect.

Envy may have prompted a too bitter judgment of the Young Man from Manchester; for, as the train bore him from Jeypore to Ahmedabad, happy in his "getting home by Christmas," pleased as a child with his Delhi atrocities, pink–cheeked, whiskered, and superbly self–confident, the Englishman whose home for the time was a dark bungaloathsome hotel, watched his departure regretfully; for he knew exactly to what sort of genial, cheery British household, rich in untravelled kin, that Young Man was speeding. It is pleasant to play at Globe–trotting; but to enter fully into the spirit of the piece, one must also be "going home for Christmas."

II
Shows the Charm of Rajputana and of Jeypore, the City of the Globe-trotter. of Its Founder and Its Embellishment. Explains the Use and Destiny of the Stud-bred, and Fails to Explain Many More Important Matters

If any part of a land strewn with dead men's bones have a special claim to distinction, Rajputana, as the cock–pit of India, stands first. East of Suez men do not build towers on the tops of hills for the sake of the view, nor do they stripe the mountain sides with bastioned stone walls to keep in cattle. Since the beginning of time, if we are to credit the legends, there was fighting—heroic fighting—at the foot of the Aravalis and beyond, in the great deserts of sand penned by those kindly mountains from spreading over the heart of India. The "Thirty–six Royal Races" fought as royal races know how to do, Chohan with Rahtor, brother against brother, son against father. Later—but excerpts from the tangled tale of force, fraud, cunning, desperate love and more desperate revenge, crime worthy of demons and virtues fit for gods, may be found, by all who care to look, in the book of the man who loved the Rajputs and gave a life's labours in their behalf. From Delhi to Abu, and from the Indus to the Chambul, each yard of ground has witnessed slaughter, pillage, and rapine. But, to–day, the capital of the State, that Dhola Rae, son of Soora Singh, hacked out more than nine hundred years ago with the sword from some weaker ruler's realm, is lighted with gas, and possesses many striking and English peculiarities.

Dhola Rae was killed in due time, and for nine hundred years Jeypore, torn by the intrigues of unruly princes and princelings, fought Asiatically.

When and how Jeypore became a feudatory of British power and in what manner we put a slur upon Rajput honour—punctilious as the honour of the Pathan—are matters of which the Globe–trotter knows more than we do. He "reads up"—to quote his own words—a city before he comes to us, and, straightway going to another city, forgets, or, worse still, mixes what he has learnt—so that in the end he writes down the Rajput a Mahratta, says that Lahore is in the Northwest Provinces, and was once the capital of Sivaji, and piteously demands a "guide–book on all India, a thing that you can carry in your trunk y' know—that gives you plain descriptions of things without mixing you up." Here is a chance for a writer of discrimination and void of

conscience!

But to return to Jeypore—a pink city set on the border of a blue lake, and surrounded by the low, red spurs of the Aravalis—a city to see and to puzzle over. There was once a ruler of the State, called Jey Singh, who lived in the days of Aurungzeb, and did him service with foot and horse. He must have been the Solomon of Rajputana, for through the forty–four years of his reign his "wisdom remained with him." He led armies, and when fighting was over, turned to literature; he intrigued desperately and successfully, but found time to gain a deep insight into astronomy, and, by what remains above ground now, we can tell that whatsoever his eyes desired, he kept not from him. Knowing his own worth, he deserted the city of Amber founded by Dhola Rae among the hills, and, six miles further, in the open plain, bade one Vedyadhar, his architect, build a new city, as seldom Indian city was built before—with huge streets straight as an arrow, sixty yards broad, and cross–streets broad and straight. Many years afterward the good people of America builded their towns after this pattern, but knowing nothing of Jey Singh, they took all the credit to themselves.

He built himself everything that pleased him, palaces and gardens and temples, and then died, and was buried under a white marble tomb on a hill overlooking the city. He was a traitor, if history speak truth, to his own kin, and he was an accomplished murderer; but he did his best to check infanticide, he reformed the Mahometan calendar; he piled up a superb library and he made Jeypore a marvel.

Later on came a successor, educated and enlightened by all the lamps of British Progress, and converted the city of Jey Singh into a surprise—a big, bewildering, practical joke. He laid down sumptuous *trottoirs* of hewn stone, and central carriage drives, also of hewn stone, in the main street, he, that is to say, Colonel Jacob, the Superintending Engineer of the State, devised a water supply for the city and studded the ways with standpipes. He built gas works, set afoot a School of Art, a Museum—all the things in fact which are necessary to Western municipal welfare and comfort, and saw that they were the best of their kind. How much Colonel Jacob has done, not only for the good of Jeypore city but for the good of the State at large, will never be known, because the officer in question is one of the not small class who resolutely refuse to talk about their own work. The result of the good work is that the old and the new, the rampantly raw and the sullenly old, stand cheek–by–jowl in startling contrast. Thus, the Sacred Bull of Shira trips over the rails of a steel tramway which brings out the city rubbish; the lacquered and painted cart behind the two little stag–like trotting bullocks catches its primitive wheels in the cast–iron gas–lamp post with the brass nozzle atop, and

all Rajputana, gayly clad, small–turbaned swaggering Rajputana, circulates along the magnificent pavements.

The fortress–crowned hills look down upon the strange medley. One of them bears on its flank in huge white letters the cheery inscription, "Welcome!" This was made when the Prince of Wales visited Jeypore to shoot his first tiger; but the average traveller of to–day may appropriate the message to himself, for Jeypore takes great care of strangers and shows them all courtesy. This, by the way, demoralises the Globe–trotter, whose first cry is, "Where can we get horses? Where can we get elephants? Who is the man to write to for all these things?"

Thanks to the courtesy of the Maharaja, it is possible to see everything, but for the incurious who object to being driven through their sights, a journey down any one of the great main streets is a day's delightful occupation. The view is as unobstructed as that of the Champs Élysées; but in place of the white–stone fronts of Paris, rises a long line of open–work screen–wall, the prevailing tone of which is pink, caramel–pink, but house–owners have unlimited license to decorate their tenements as they please. Jeypore, broadly considered, is Hindu, and her architecture of the riotous, many–arched type which even the Globe–trotter after a short time learns to call Hindu. It is neither temperate nor noble, but it satisfies the general desire for something that "really looks Indian."

A perverse taste for low company drew the Englishman from the pavement—to walk upon a real stone pavement is in itself a privilege —up a side–street, where he assisted at a quail fight and found the low–caste Rajput a cheery and affable soul. The owner of the losing quail was a trooper in the Maharaja's army. He explained that his pay was six rupees a month paid bimonthly. He had to pay the cost of his khaki blouse, brown–leather accoutrements, and jack–boots; lance, saddle, sword, and horse were given free. He refused to tell for how many months in the year he was drilled, and said vaguely that his duties were mainly escort ones, and he had no fault to find with them. The defeat of his quail had vexed him, and he desired the Sahib to understand that the sowars of His Highness's army could ride. A clumsy attempt at a compliment so fired his martial blood that he climbed into his saddle, and then and there insisted on showing off his horsemanship. The road was narrow, the lance was long, and the horse was a big one, but no one objected, and the Englishman sat him down on a doorstep and watched the fun. The horse seemed in some shadowy way familiar. His head was not the lean head of the Kathiawar, nor his crest the crest of the Marwarri, and his forelegs did not belong to these stony districts. "Where did he come from?" The sowar pointed northward and said, "from Amritsar," but he

pronounced it "Armtzar." Many horses had been bought at the spring fairs in the Punjab; they cost about two hundred rupees each—perhaps more, the sowar could not say. Some came from Hissar and some from other places beyond Delhi. They were very good horses. "That horse there," he pointed to one a little distance down the street, "is the son of a big Government horse—the kind that the Sirkar make for breeding horses—so high!" The owner of "that horse" swaggered up, jaw bandaged and cat–moustached, and bade the Englishman look at his mount; bought, of course, when a colt. Both men together said that the Sahib had better examine the Maharaja Sahib's stable, where there were hundreds of horses, huge as elephants or tiny as sheep.

To the stables the Englishman accordingly went, knowing beforehand what he would find, and wondering whether the Sirkar's "big horses" were meant to get mounts for Rajput sowars. The Maharaja's stables are royal in size and appointments. The enclosure round which they stand must be about half a mile long—it allows ample space for exercising, besides paddocks for the colts. The horses, about two hundred and fifty, are bedded in pure white sand—bad for the coat if they roll, but good for the feet—the pickets are of white marble, the heel–ropes in every case of good sound rope, and in every case the stables are exquisitely clean. Each stall contains above the manger, a curious little bunk for the syce who, if he uses the accommodation, must assuredly die once each hot weather.

A journey round the stables is saddening, for the attendants are very anxious to strip their charges, and the stripping shows so much. A few men in India are credited with the faculty of never forgetting a horse they have once seen, and of knowing the produce of every stallion they have met. The Englishman would have given something for their company at that hour. His knowledge of horse–flesh was very limited; but he felt certain that more than one or two of the sleek, perfectly groomed country–breds should have been justifying their existence in the ranks of the British cavalry, instead of eating their heads off on six seers[1] of gram and one of sugar per diem. But they had all been honestly bought and honestly paid for; and there was nothing in the wide world to prevent His Highness, if he wished to do so, from sweeping up the pick and pride of all the stud–bred horses in the Punjab. The attendants appeared to take a wicked delight in saying "eshtud–bred"[2] very loudly and with unnecessary emphasis as they threw back the loin–cloth. Sometimes they were wrong, but in too many cases they were right.

The Englishman left the stables and the great central maidan, where a nervous Biluchi was being taught, by a perfect network of ropes, to "monkey–jump," and went out into the streets reflecting on the working of horse–breeding operations under the Government of

India, and the advantages of having unlimited money wherewith to profit by other people's mistakes.

Then, as happened to the great Tartarin of Tarescon, wild beasts began to roar, and a crowd of little boys laughed. The lions of Jeypore are tigers, caged in a public place for the sport of the people, who hiss at them and disturb their royal feelings. Two or three of the six great brutes are magnificent. All of them are short–tempered, and the bars of their captivity not too strong. A pariah–dog was furtively trying to scratch out a fragment of meat from between the bars of one of the cages, and the occupant tolerated him. Growing bolder, the starveling growled; the tiger struck at him with his paw, and the dog fled howling with fear. When he returned, he brought two friends with him, and the three mocked the captive from a distance.

It was not a pleasant sight and suggested Globe–trotters—gentlemen who imagine that "more curricles" should come at their bidding, and on being undeceived become abusive.

III
Does Not in Any Sort Describe the Dead City of Amber, but Gives Detailed Information About a Cotton-press

And what shall be said of Amber, Queen of the Pass—the city that Jey Singh bade his people slough as snakes cast their skins? The Globe–trotter will assure you that it must be "done" before anything else, and the Globe–trotter is, for once, perfectly correct. Amber lies between six and seven miles from Jeypore among the "tumbled fragments of the hills," and is reachable by so prosaic a conveyance as a *ticca–ghari*, and so uncomfortable a one as an elephant. *He* is provided by the Maharaja, and the people who make India their prey, are apt to accept his services as a matter of course.

Rise very early in the morning, before the stars have gone out, and drive through the sleeping city till the pavement gives place to cactus and sand, and educational and enlightened institutions to mile upon mile of semi–decayed Hindu temples—brown and weather–beaten—running down to the shores of the great Man Sagar Lake, wherein are more ruined temples, palaces, and fragments of causeways. The water–birds have their home in the half–submerged arcades and the crocodile nuzzles the shafts of the pillars. It is a fitting prelude to the desolation of Amber. Beyond the Man Sagar the road of to–day climbs up–hill, and by its side runs the huge stone causeway of yesterday—blocks sunk in concrete. Down this path the swords of Amber went out to kill. A triple wall rings the city, and, at the third gate, the road drops into the valley of Amber. In the half light of dawn, a great city sunk between hills and built round three sides of a lake is dimly visible, and one waits to catch the hum that should arise from it as the day breaks. The air in the valley is bitterly chill. With the growing light, Amber stands revealed, and the traveller sees that it is a city that will never wake. A few beggars live in huts at the end of the valley, but the temples, the shrines, the palaces, and the tiers–on–tiers of houses are desolate. Trees grow upon and split the walls, the windows are filled with brushwood, and the cactus chokes the street. The Englishman made his way up the side of the hill to the great palace that overlooks everything except the red fort of Jeighur, guardian of Amber. As the elephant swung up the steep roads paved with stone and built out on the sides of the hill, he looked into empty houses where the little grey squirrel sat and scratched its ears. The peacock walked on the house–tops, and the blue pigeon roosted

within. He passed under iron–studded gates whose hinges were eaten out with rust, and by walls plumed and crowned with grass, and under more gate–ways, till, at last, he reached the palace and came suddenly into a great quadrangle where two blinded, arrogant stallions, covered with red and gold trappings, screamed and neighed at each other from opposite ends of the vast space. For a little time these were the only visible living beings, and they were in perfect accord with the spirit of the spot. Afterwards certain workmen appeared; for it seems that the Maharaja keeps the old palace of his forefathers in good repair, but they were modern and mercenary, and with great difficulty were detached from the skirts of the traveller. A somewhat extensive experience of palace–seeing had taught him that it is best to see palaces alone, for the Oriental as a guide is undiscriminating and sets too great a store on corrugated iron roofs and glazed drain–pipes.

So the Englishman went into this palace built of stone, bedded on stone, springing out of scarped rock, and reached by stone ways—nothing but stone. Presently, he stumbled across a little temple of Kali, a gem of marble tracery and inlay, very dark and, at that hour of the morning, very cold.

If, as Viollet–le–Duc tells us to believe, a building reflects the character of its inhabitants, it must be impossible for one reared in an Eastern palace to think straightly or speak freely or—but here the annals of Rajputana contradict the theory—to act openly. The cramped and darkened rooms, the narrow smooth–walled passages with recesses where a man might wait for his enemy unseen, the maze of ascending and descending stairs leading nowhither, the ever–present screens of marble tracery that may hide or reveal so much,—all these things breathe of plot and counter–plot, league and intrigue. In a living palace where the sightseer knows and feels that there are human beings everywhere, and that he is followed by scores of unseen eyes, the impression is almost unendurable. In a dead palace—a cemetery of loves and hatreds done with hundreds of years ago, and of plottings that had for their end, though the greybeards who plotted knew it not, the coming of the British tourist with guide–book and sun–hat—oppression gives place to simply impertinent curiosity. The Englishman wandered into all parts of the palace, for there was no one to stop him—not even the ghosts of the dead Queens—through ivory–studded doors, into the women's quarters, where a stream of water once flowed over a chiselled marble channel. A creeper had set its hands upon the lattice there, and there was dust of old nests in one of the niches in the wall. Did the lady of light virtue who managed to become possessed of so great a portion of Jey Singh's library ever set her dainty feet in the trim garden of the Hall of Pleasure beyond the screen–work? Was it in the forty–pillared Hall of Audience that the

order went forth that the Chief of Birjooghar was to be slain, and from what wall did the King look out when the horsemen clattered up the steep stone path to the palace, bearing on their saddle–bows the heads of the bravest of Rajore? There were questions innumerable to be asked in each court and keep and cell; but the only answer was the cooing of the pigeons.

If a man desired beauty, there was enough and to spare in the palace; and of strength more than enough. With inlay and carved marble, with glass and colour, the Kings who took their pleasure in that now desolate pile, made all that their eyes rested upon royal and superb. But any description of the artistic side of the palace, if it were not impossible, would be wearisome. The wise man will visit it when time and occasion serve, and will then, in some small measure, understand what must have been the riotous, sumptuous, murderous life to which our Governors and Lieutenant–Governors, Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners, Colonels and Captains and the Subalterns, have put an end.

From the top of the palace you may read if you please the Book of Ezekiel written in stone upon the hillside. Coming up, the Englishman had seen the city from below or on a level. He now looked into its very heart—the heart that had ceased to beat. There was no sound of men or cattle, or grind–stones in those pitiful streets—nothing but the cooing of the pigeons. At first it seemed that the palace was not ruined at all—that soon the women would come up on the house–tops and the bells would ring in the temples. But as he attempted to follow with his eye the turns of the streets, the Englishman saw that they died out in wood tangle and blocks of fallen stone, that some of the houses were rent with great cracks, and pierced from roof to road with holes that let in the morning sun. The drip–stones of the eaves were gap–toothed, and the tracery of the screens had fallen out so that zenana–rooms lay shamelessly open to the day. On the outskirts of the city, the strong–walled houses dwindled and sank down to mere stone–heaps and faint indications of plinth and wall, hard to trace against the background of stony soil. The shadow of the palace lay over two–thirds of the city and the trees deepened the shadow. "He who has bent him o'er the dead" *after* the hour of which Byron sings, knows that the features of the man become blunted as it were—the face begins to fade. The same hideous look lies on the face of the Queen of the Pass, and when once this is realised, the eye wonders that it could have ever believed in the life of her. She is the city "whose graves are set in the side of the pit, and her company is round about her graves," sister of Pathros, Zoan, and No.

Moved by a thoroughly insular instinct, the Englishman took up a piece of plaster and heaved it from the palace wall into the dark

streets. It bounded from a house–top to a window–ledge, and thence into a little square, and the sound of its fall was hollow and echoing, as the sound of a stone in a well. Then the silence closed up upon the sound, till in the far–away courtyard below the roped stallions began screaming afresh. There may be desolation in the great Indian Desert to the westward, and there is desolation on the open seas; but the desolation of Amber is beyond the loneliness either of land or sea. Men by the hundred thousand must have toiled at the walls that bound it, the temples and bastions that stud the walls, the fort that overlooks all, the canals that once lifted water to the palace, and the garden in the lake of the valley. Renan could describe it as it stands to–day, and Verestchaguin could paint it.

Arrived at this satisfactory conclusion, the Englishman went down through the palace and the scores of venomous and suggestive little rooms, to the elephant in the courtyard, and was taken back in due time to the Nineteenth Century in the shape of His Highness, the Maharaja's Cotton–Press, returning a profit of twenty–seven per cent, and fitted with two engines, of fifty horse–power each, an hydraulic press, capable of exerting a pressure of three tons per square inch, and everything else to correspond. It stood under a neat corrugated iron roof close to the Jeypore Railway Station, and was in most perfect order, but somehow it did not taste well after Amber. There was aggressiveness about the engines and the smell of the raw cotton.

The modern side of Jeypore must not be mixed with the ancient.

IV
The Temple of Mahadeo and the Manners of Such as See India. the Man by the Water-troughs and His Knowledge. the Voice of the City and What It Said. Personalities and the Hospital. the House Beautiful of Jeypore and Its Builders

From the Cotton–Press the Englishman wandered through the wide streets till he came into an Hindu temple—rich in marble stone and inlay, and a deep and tranquil silence, close to the Public Library of the State. The brazen bull was hung with flowers, and men were burning the evening incense before Mahadeo; while those who had prayed their prayer beat upon the bells hanging from the roof and passed out, secure in the knowledge that the God had heard them. If there be much religion, there is little reverence, as Westerns understand the term, at the services of the Gods of the East. A tiny little maiden, child of a monstrously ugly, wall–eyed priest, staggered across the marble pavement to the shrine and threw, with a gust of childish laughter, the blossoms she was carrying into the lap of the Great Mahadeo himself. Then she made as though she would leap up to the bell and ran away, still laughing, into the shadow of the cells behind the shrine, while her father explained that she was but a baby and that Mahadeo would take no notice. The temple, he said, was specially favoured by the Maharaja, and drew from lands an income of twenty thousand rupees a year. Thakoors and great men also gave gifts out of their benevolence; and there was nothing in the wide world to prevent an Englishman from following their example.

By this time—for Amber and the Cotton–Press had filled the hours—night was falling, and the priests unhooked the swinging jets and began to light up the impassive face of Mahadeo with gas. They used Swedish matches!

Full night brought the hotel and its curiously composed human menagerie.

There is, if a work–a–day world will believe, a society entirely outside, and unconnected with, that of the Station—a planet within a planet, where nobody knows anything about the Collector's wife, the Colonel's dinner–party, or what was really the matter with the Engineer. It is a curious, an insatiably curious, thing, and its literature is Newman's *Bradshaw*. Wandering "old arms–sellers" and others live

upon it, and so do the garnetmen and the makers of ancient Rajput shields. The world of the innocents abroad is a touching and unsophisticated place, and its very atmosphere urges the Anglo–Indian unconsciously to an extravagant mendacity. Can you wonder, then, that a guide of long–standing should in time grow to be an accomplished liar?

Into this world sometimes breaks the Anglo–Indian returned from leave, or a fugitive to the sea, and his presence is like that of a well–known land–mark in the desert. The old arms–seller knows and avoids him, and he is detested by the jobber of gharis who calls every one "my lord" in English, and panders to the "glaring race anomaly" by saying that every carriage not under his control is "rotten, my lord, having been used by natives." One of the privileges of playing at tourist is the brevet–rank of "Lord."

There are many, and some very curious, methods of seeing India. One of these is buying English translations of the more Zolaistic of Zola's novels and reading them from breakfast to dinner–time in the verandah. Yet another, even simpler, is American in its conception. Take a Newman's *Bradshaw* and a blue pencil, and race up and down the length of the Empire, ticking off the names of the stations "done." To do this thoroughly, keep strictly to the railway buildings and form your conclusions through the carriage–windows. These eyes have seen both ways of working in full blast; and, on the whole, the first is the most commendable.

Let us consider now with due reverence the modern side of Jeypore. It is difficult to write of a nickel–plated civilisation set down under the immemorial Aravalis in the first state of Rajputana. The red–grey hills seem to laugh at it, and the ever–shifting sand–dunes under the hills take no account of it, for they advance upon the bases of the monogrammed, coronet–crowned lamp–posts, and fill up the points of the natty tramways near the Waterworks, which are the outposts of the civilisation of Jeypore.

Escape from the city by the Railway Station till you meet the cactus and the mud–bank and the Maharaja's Cotton–Press. Pass between a tramway and a trough for wayfaring camels till your foot sinks ankle–deep in soft sand, and you come upon what seems to be the fringe of illimitable desert—mound upon mound of tussocks overgrown with plumed grass where the parrots sit and swing. Here, if you have kept to the road, you shall find a dam faced with stone, a great tank, and pumping machinery fine as the heart of a municipal engineer can desire—pure water, sound pipes, and well–kept engines. If you belong to what is sarcastically styled an "able and intelligent municipality" under the British Rule, go down to the level of the tank, scoop up the water in your hands and drink, thinking meanwhile of

the defects of the town whence you came. The experience will be a profitable one. There are statistics in connection with the Waterworks figures relating to "three–throw–plungers," delivery and supply, which should be known to the professional reader. They would not interest the unprofessional who would learn his lesson among the thronged standpipes of the city.

While the Englishman was preparing in his mind a scathing rebuke for an erring municipality that he knew of, a camel swung across the sands, its driver's jaw and brow bound mummy–fashion to guard against the dust. The man was evidently a stranger to the place, for he pulled up and asked the Englishman where the drinking–troughs were. He was a gentleman and bore very patiently with the Englishman's absurd ignorance of his dialect. He had come from some village, with an unpronounceable name, thirty *kos* away, to see his brother's son, who was sick in the big Hospital. While the camel was drinking the man talked, lying back along his mount. He knew nothing of Jeypore, except the names of certain Englishmen in it, the men who, he said, had made the Waterworks and built the Hospital for his brother's son's comfort.

And this is the curious feature of Jeypore; though happily the city is not unique in its peculiarity. When the late Maharaja ascended the throne, more than fifty years ago, it was his royal will and pleasure that Jeypore should advance. Whether he was prompted by love for his subjects, desire for praise, or the magnificent vanity with which Jey Singh must have been so largely dowered, are questions that concern nobody. In the latter years of his reign, he was supplied with Englishmen who made the State their fatherland, and identified themselves with its progress as only Englishmen can. Behind them stood the Maharaja ready to spend money with a lavishness that no Supreme Government would dream of; and it would not be too much to say that they together made the State what it is. When Ram Singh died, Madho Singh, his successor, a conservative Hindu, forbore to interfere in any way with the work that was going forward. It is said in the city that he does not overburden himself with the cares of State, the driving power being mainly in the hands of a Bengali, who has everything but the name of Minister. Nor do the Englishmen, it is said in the city, mix themselves with the business of government; their business being wholly executive.

They can, according to the voice of the city, do what they please, and the voice of the city—not in the main roads, but in the little side–alleys where the stall–less bull blocks the path—attests how well their pleasure has suited the pleasure of the people. In truth, to men of action few things could be more delightful than having a State of fifteen thousand square miles placed at their disposal, as it were, to

leave their mark on. Unfortunately for the vagrant traveller, those who work hard for practical ends prefer not to talk about their doings, and he must, therefore, pick up what information he can at second–hand or in the city. The men at the standpipes explain that the Maharaja Sahib's father gave the order for the Waterworks and that Yakub (Jacob) Sahib made them—not only in the city, but out away in the district. "Did the people grow more crops thereby?" "Of course they did. Were canals made only to wash in?" "How much more crops?" "Who knows? The Sahib had better go and ask some official." Increased irrigation means increase of revenue for the State somewhere, but the man who brought about the increase does not say so.

After a few days of amateur Globe–trotting, a shamelessness great as that of the other loafer—the red–nosed man who hangs about one garden and is always on the eve of starting for Calcutta—possesses the masquerader; so that he feels equal to asking a Resident for a parcel–gilt howdah, or dropping into dinner with a Lieutenant–Governor. No man has a right to keep anything back from a Globe–trotter, who is a mild, temperate, gentlemanly, and unobtrusive seeker after truth. Therefore he who, without a word of enlightenment, sends the visitor into a city which he himself has beautified and adorned and made clean and wholesome, deserves unsparing exposure. And the city may be trusted to betray him. The *malli* in the Ram Newas Gardens—Gardens which are finer than any in India and fit to rank with the best in Paris—says that the Maharaja gave the order and Yakub Sahib made the Gardens. He also says that the Hospital just outside the Gardens was built by Yakub Sahib, and if the Sahib will go to the centre of the Gardens, he will find another big building, a Museum by the same hand.

But the Englishman went first to the Hospital, and found the out–patients beginning to arrive. A Hospital cannot tell lies about its own progress as a municipality can. Sick folk either come or lie in their own villages. In the case of the Mayo Hospital, they came, and the operation book showed that they had been in the habit of coming. Doctors at issue with provincial and local administrations, Civil Surgeons who cannot get their indents complied with, ground–down and mutinous practitioners all India over, would do well to visit the Mayo Hospital, Jeypore. They might, in the exceeding bitterness of their envy, be able to point out some defects in its supplies, or its beds, or its splints, or in the absolute isolation of the women's quarters from the men's.

From the Hospital the Englishman went to the Museum in the centre of the Gardens, and was eaten up by it, for Museums appealed to him. The casing of the jewel was in the first place superb—a

wonder of carven white stone of the Indo–Saracenic style. It stood on a stone plinth, and was rich in stone–tracery, green marble columns from Ajmir, red marble, white marble colonnades, courts with fountains, richly carved wooden doors, frescoes, inlay, and colour. The ornamentation of the tombs of Delhi, the palaces of Agra, and the walls of Amber have been laid under contribution to supply the designs in bracket, arch, and soffit; and stone–masons from the Jeypore School of Art have woven into the work the best that their hands could produce. The building in essence if not in the fact of to–day, is the work of Freemasons. The men were allowed a certain scope in their choice of detail and the result—but it should be seen to be understood, as it stands in those Imperial Gardens. And, observe, the man who had designed it, who had superintended its erection, had said no word to indicate that there were such a thing in the place, or that every foot of it, from the domes of the roof to the cool green chunam dadoes and the carving of the rims of the fountains in the courtyard, was worth studying! Round the arches of the great centre court are written in Sanskrit and Hindi, texts from the great Hindu writers of old, bearing on the beauty of wisdom and the sanctity of true knowledge.

In the central corridor are six great frescoes, each about nine feet by five, copies of illustrations in the Royal Folio of the *Razmnameh*, the *Mahabharata*, which Abkar caused to be done by the best artists of his day. The original is in the Museum, and he who can steal it will find a purchaser at any price up to fifty thousand pounds.

V
Of the Sordidness of the Supreme Government on the Revenue Side; and of the Palace of Jeypore. a Great King's Pleasure-house, and the Work of the Servants of State

Internally, there is, in all honesty, no limit to the luxury of the Jeypore Museum. It revels in "South Kensington" cases—of the approved pattern—that turn the beholder homesick, and South Kensington labels, whereon the description, measurements, and price of each object are fairly printed. These make savage one who knows how labelling is bungled in some of the Government Museums—our starved barns that are supposed to hold the economic exhibits, not of little States, but of great Provinces.

The floors are of dark red chunam, overlaid with a discreet and silent matting; the doors, where they are not plate glass, are of carved wood, no two alike, hinged by sumptuous brass hinges on to marble jambs and opening without noise. On the carved marble pillars of each hall are fixed revolving cases of the South Kensington pattern to show textile fabrics, gold lace, and the like. In the recesses of the walls are more cases, and on the railing of the gallery that runs round each of the three great central rooms, are fixed low cases to hold natural history specimens and wax models of fruits and vegetables.

Hear this, Governments of India from the Punjab to Madras! The doors come true to the jamb, the cases, which have been through a hot weather, are neither warped nor cracked, nor are there unseemly tallow–drops and flaws in the glasses. The maroon cloth, on or against which the exhibits are placed, is of close texture, untouched by the moth, neither stained nor meagre nor sunfaded; the revolving cases revolve freely without rattling; there is not a speck of dust from one end of the building to the other, because the menial staff are numerous enough to keep everything clean, and the Curator's office is a veritable office—not a shed or a bath–room, or a loose–box partitioned from the main building. These things are so because money has been spent on the Museum, and it is now a rebuke to all other Museums in India from Calcutta downwards. Whether it is not too good to be buried away in a native State is a question which envious men may raise and answer as they choose. Not long ago, the editor of a Bombay paper passed through it, but having the interests of the Egocentric Presidency before his eyes, dwelt more upon the idea of the building than its structural beauties; saying that Bombay, who

professed a weakness for technical education, should be ashamed of herself. And he was quite right.

The system of the Museum is complete in intention, as are its appointments in design. At present there are some fifteen thousand objects of art, covering a complete exposition of the arts, from enamels to pottery and from brass–ware to stone–carving, of the State of Jeypore. They are compared with similar arts of other lands. Thus a Damio's sword—a gem of lacquer–plated silk and stud–work—flanks the *tulwars* of Marwar and the *jezails* of Tonk; and reproductions of Persian and Russian brass–work stand side by side with the handicrafts of the pupils of the Jeypore School of Art. A photograph of His Highness the present Maharaja is set among the arms, which are the most prominent features of the first or metal–room. As the villagers enter, they salaam reverently to the photo, and then move on slowly, with an evidently intelligent interest in what they see. Ruskin could describe the scene admirably—pointing out how reverence must precede the study of art, and how it is good for Englishmen and Rajputs alike to bow on occasion before Geisler's cap. They thumb the revolving cases of cloths do those rustics, and artlessly try to feel the texture through the protecting glass. The main object of the Museum is avowedly provincial—to show the craftsman of Jeypore the best that his predecessors could do, and what foreign artists have done. In time—but the Curator of the Museum has many schemes which will assuredly bear fruit in time, and it would be unfair to divulge them. Let those who doubt the thoroughness of a Museum under one man's control, built, filled, and endowed with royal generosity—an institution perfectly independent of the Government of India—go and exhaustively visit Dr. Hendley's charge at Jeypore. Like the man who made the building, he refuses to talk, and so the greater part of the work that he has in hand must be guessed at.

At one point, indeed, the Curator was taken off his guard. A huge map of the kingdom showed in green the portions that had been brought under irrigation, while blue circles marked the towns that owned dispensaries. "I want to bring every man in the State within twenty miles of a dispensary—and I've nearly done it," said he. Then he checked himself, and went off to food–grains in little bottles as being neutral and colourless things. Envy is forced to admit that the arrangement of the Museum—far too important a matter to be explained off–hand—is Continental in its character, and has a definite end and bearing—a trifle omitted by many institutions other than Museums. But—in fine, what can one say of a collection whose very labels are gilt–edged! Shameful extravagance? Nothing of the kind—only finish, perfectly in keeping with the rest of the fittings—a finish that we in *kutcha*[3] India have failed to catch.

From the Museum go out through the city to the Maharaja's Palace—skilfully avoiding the man who would show you the Maharaja's European billiard–room,—and wander through a wilderness of sunlit, sleepy courts, gay with paint and frescoes, till you reach an inner square, where smiling grey–bearded men squat at ease and play *chaupur*[4]—just such a game as cost the Pandavs the fair Draupadi—with inlaid dice and gayly lacquered pieces. These ancients are very polite and will press you to play, but give no heed to them, for *chaupur* is an expensive game—expensive as quail–fighting, when you have backed the wrong bird and the people are laughing at your inexperience. The Maharaja's Palace is gay, overwhelmingly rich in candelabra, painted ceilings, gilt mirrors, and other evidences of a too hastily assimilated civilisation; but, if the evidence of the ear can be trusted, the old, old game of intrigue goes on as merrily as of yore. A figure in saffron came out of a dark arch into the sunlight, almost falling into the arms of one in pink. "Where have you come from?" "I have been to see —" the name was unintelligible. "That is a lie; you have *not*!" Then, across the court, some one laughed a low, croaking laugh. The pink and saffron figures separated as though they had been shot, and disappeared into separate bolt–holes. It was a curious little incident, and might have meant a great deal or just nothing at all. It distracted the attention of the ancients bowed above the *chaupur* cloth.

In the Palace–gardens there is even a greater stillness than that about the courts, and here nothing of the West, unless a critical soul might take exception to the lamp–posts. At the extreme end lies a lake–like tank swarming with *muggers*.[5] It is reached through an opening under a block of zenana buildings. Remembering that all beasts by the palaces of Kings or the temples of priests in this country would answer to the name of "Brother," the Englishman cried with the voice of faith across the water. And the mysterious freemasonry did not fail. At the far end of the tank rose a ripple that grew and grew and grew like a thing in a nightmare, and became presently an aged *mugger*. As he neared the shore, there emerged, the green slime thick upon his eyelids, another beast, and the two together snapped at a cigar–butt—the only reward for their courtesy. Then, disgusted, they sank stern first with a gentle sigh. Now a *mugger's* sigh is the most suggestive sound in animal speech. It suggested first the zenana buildings overhead, the walled passes through the purple hills beyond, a horse that might clatter through the passes till he reached the Man Sagar Lake below the passes, and a boat that might row across the Man Sagar till it nosed the wall of the Palace–tank, and then—then uprose the *mugger* with the filth upon his forehead and winked one horny eyelid—in truth he did!—and so supplied a fitting end to a

foolish fiction of old days and things that might have been. But it must be unpleasant to live in a house whose base is washed by such a tank.

And so back through the chunamed courts, and among the gentle sloping paths between the orange trees, up to an entrance of the palace, guarded by two rusty brown dogs from Kabul, each big as a man, and each requiring a man's charpoy to sleep upon. Very gay was the front of the palace, very brilliant were the glimpses of the damask–couched, gilded rooms within, and very, very civilised were the lamp–posts with Ram Singh's monogram, devised to look like V. R., at the bottom, and a coronet at the top. An unseen brass band among the orange bushes struck up the overture of the *Bronze Horse*. Those who know the music will see at once that that was the only tune which exactly and perfectly fitted the scene and its surroundings. It was a coincidence and a revelation.

In his time and when he was not fighting, Jey Singh, the second, who built the city, was a great astronomer—a royal Omar Khayyam, for he, like the tent–maker of Nishapur, reformed a calendar, and strove to wring their mysteries from the stars with instruments worthy of a king. But in the end he wrote that the goodness of the Almighty was above everything, and died, leaving his observatory to decay without the palace–grounds.

From the *Bronze Horse* to the grass–grown enclosure that holds the Yantr Samrat, or Prince of Dials, is rather an abrupt passage. Jey Singh built him a dial with a gnomon some ninety feet high, to throw a shadow against the sun, and the gnomon stands to–day, though there is grass in the kiosque at the top and the flight of steps up the hypotenuse is worn. He built also a zodiacal dial—twelve dials upon one platform—to find the moment of true noon at any time of the year, and hollowed out of the earth place for two hemispherical cups, cut by belts of stone, for comparative observations.

He made cups for calculating eclipses, and a mural quadrant and many other strange things of stone and mortar, of which people hardly know the names and but very little of the uses. Once, said a man in charge of two tiny elephants, *Indur* and *Har*, a Sahib came with the Viceroy, and spent eight days in the enclosure of the great neglected observatory, seeing and writing things in a book. But *he* understood *Sanskrit*—the Sanskrit upon the faces of the dials, and the meaning of the gnoma and pointers. Nowadays no one understands Sanskrit—not even the Pundits; but without doubt Jey Singh was a great man.

The hearer echoed the statement, though he knew nothing of astronomy, and of all the wonders in the observatory was only struck by the fact that the shadow of the Prince of Dials moved over its vast plate so quickly that it seemed as though Time, wroth at the insolence

of Jey Singh, had loosed the Horses of the Sun and were sweeping everything—dainty Palace–gardens and ruinous instruments—into the darkness of eternal night. So he went away chased by the shadow on the dial, and returned to the hotel, where he found men who said—this must be a catch–word of Globe–trotters—that they were "much pleased at" Amber. They further thought that "house–rent would be cheap in those parts," and sniggered over the witticism. There is a class of tourists, and a strangely large one, who individually never get farther than the "much pleased" state under any circumstances. This same class of tourists, it has also been observed, are usually free with hackneyed puns, vapid phrases, and alleged or bygone jokes. Jey Singh, in spite of a few discreditable *laches*, was a temperate and tolerant man; but he would have hanged those Globe–trotters in their trunk–straps as high as the Yantr Samrat.

Next morning, in the grey dawn, the Englishman rose up and shook the sand of Jeypore from his feet, and went with Master Coryatt and Sir Thomas Roe to "Adsmir," wondering whether a year in Jeypore would be sufficient to exhaust its interest, and why he had not gone out to the tombs of the dead Kings and the passes of Gulta and the fort of Motee Dungri. But what he wondered at most—knowing how many men who have in any way been connected with the birth of an institution, do, to the end of their days, continue to drag forward and exhume their labours and the honours that did *not* come to them—was the work of the two men who, together for years past, have been pushing Jeypore along the stone–dressed paths of civilisation, peace, and comfort. "Servants of the Raj" they called themselves, and surely they have served the Raj past all praise. The people in the city and the camel–driver from the sand–hills told of their work. They themselves held their peace as to what they had done, and, when pressed, referred—crowning baseness—to reports. Printed ones!

VI
Showing How Her Majesty's Mails Went to Udaipur and Fell Out by the Way

Arrived at Ajmir, the Englishman fell among tents pitched under the shadow of a huge banian tree, and in them was a Punjabi. Now there is no brotherhood like the brotherhood of the Pauper Province; for it is even greater than the genial and unquestioning hospitality which, in spite of the loafer and the Globe–trotter, seems to exist throughout India. Ajmir being British territory, though the inhabitants are allowed to carry arms, is the headquarters of many of the banking firms who lend to the Native States. The complaint of the Setts[6] to–day is that their trade is bad, because an unsympathetic Government induces Native States to make railways and become prosperous. "Look at Jodhpur!" said a gentleman whose possessions might be roughly estimated at anything between thirty and forty–five lakhs. "Time was when Jodhpur was always in debt—and not so long ago, either. Now, they've got a railroad and are carrying salt over it, and, as sure as I stand here, they have a *surplus*! What can we do?" Poor pauper! However, he makes a little profit on the fluctuations in the coinage of the States round him, for every small king seems to have the privilege of striking his own image and inflicting the Great Exchange Question on his subjects. It is a poor State that has not two seers and five different rupees.

From a criminal point of view, Ajmir is not a pleasant place. The Native States lie all round and about it, and portions of the district are ten miles off, Native State–locked on every side. Thus the criminal, who may be a burglarious Meena lusting for the money bags of the Setts, or a Peshawari down south on a cold weather tour, has his plan of campaign much simplified.

The Englishman made only a short stay in the town, hearing that there was to be a ceremony—*tamasha* covers a multitude of things—at the capital of His Highness the Maharana of Udaipur—a town some hundred and eighty miles south of Ajmir, not known to many people beyond Viceroys and their Staffs and the officials of the Rajputana Agency. So he took a Neemuch train in the very early morning and, with the Punjabi, went due south to Chitor, the point of departure for Udaipur. In time the Aravalis gave place to a dead, flat, stone–strewn plain, thick with dhak–jungle. Later the date–palm fraternised with the dhak, and low hills stood on either side of the line. To this succeeded a tract rich in pure white stone—the line was ballasted with it. Then came more low hills, each with a cock's comb of splintered

rock, overlooking dhak–jungle and villages fenced with thorns—places that at once declared themselves tigerish. Last, the huge bulk of Chitor showed itself on the horizon. The train crossed the Gumber River and halted almost in the shadow of the hills on which the old pride of Udaipur was set.

It is difficult to give an idea of the Chitor fortress; but the long line of brown wall springing out of bush–covered hill suggested at once those pictures, such as the *Graphic* publishes, of the *Inflexible* or the *Devastation*—gigantic men–of–war with a very low free–board ploughing through green sea. The hill on which the fort stands is ship–shaped and some miles long, and, from a distance, every inch appears to be scarped and guarded. But there was no time to see Chitor. The business of the day was to get, if possible, to Udaipur from Chitor Station, which was composed of one platform, one telegraph–room, a bench, and several vicious dogs.

The State of Udaipur is as backward as Jeypore is advanced—if we judge it by the standard of civilisation. It does not approve of the incursions of Englishmen, and, to do it justice, it thoroughly succeeds in conveying its silent sulkiness. Still, where there is one English Resident, one Doctor, one Engineer, one Settlement Officer, and one Missionary, there must be a mail at least once a day. There was a mail. The Englishman, men said, might go by it if he liked, or he might not. Then, with a great sinking of the heart, he began to realise that his caste was of no value in the stony pastures of Mewar, among the swaggering gentlemen, who were so lavishly adorned with arms. There was a mail, the ghost of a tonga, with tattered side–cloths and patched roof, inconceivably filthy within and without, and it was Her Majesty's. There was another tonga,—an *aram* tonga, a carriage of ease—but the Englishman was not to have it. It was reserved for a Rajput Thakur who was going to Udaipur with his "tail." The Thakur, in claret–coloured velvet with a blue turban, a revolver—Army pattern—a sword, and five or six friends, also with swords, came by and indorsed the statement. Now, the mail tonga had a wheel which was destined to become the Wheel of Fate, and to lead to many curious things. Two diseased yellow ponies were extracted from a dung–hill and yoked to the tonga; and after due deliberation Her Majesty's mail started, the Thakur following.

In twelve hours, or thereabouts, the seventy miles between Chitor and Udaipur would be accomplished. Behind the tonga cantered an armed sowar. He was the guard. The Thakur's tonga came up with a rush, ran deliberately across the bows of the Englishman, chipped a pony, and passed on. One lives and learns. The Thakur seems to object to following the foreigner.

At the halting–stages, once in every six miles, that is to say, the

ponies were carefully undressed and all their accoutrements fitted more or less accurately on to the backs of any ponies that might happen to be near; the released animals finding their way back to their stables alone and unguided. There were no grooms, and the harness hung on by special dispensation of Providence. Still the ride over a good road, driven through a pitilessly stony country, had its charms for a while. At sunset the low hills turned to opal and wine–red and the brown dust flew up pure gold; for the tonga was running straight into the sinking sun. Now and again would pass a traveller on a camel, or a gang of *Bunjarras*[7] with their pack–bullocks and their women; and the sun touched the brasses of their swords and guns till the poor wretches seemed rich merchants come back from travelling with Sindbad.

On a rock on the right–hand side, thirty–four great vultures were gathered over the carcass of a steer. And this was an evil omen. They made unseemly noises as the tonga passed, and a raven came out of a bush on the right and answered them. To crown all, one of the hide and skin castes sat on the left–hand side of the road, cutting up some of the flesh that he had stolen from the vultures. Could a man desire three more inauspicious signs for a night's travel? Twilight came, and the hills were alive with strange noises, as the red moon, nearly at her full, rose over Chitor. To the low hills of the mad geological formation, the tumbled strata that seem to obey no law, succeeded level ground, the pasture lands of Mewar, cut by the Beruch and Wyan, streams running over smooth water–worn rock, and, as the heavy embankments and ample waterways showed, very lively in the rainy season.

In this region occurred the last and most inauspicious omen of all. Something had gone wrong with a crupper, a piece of blue and white punkah–cord. The Englishman pointed it out, and the driver, descending, danced on that lonely road an unholy dance, singing the while: "The *dumchi*![8] The *dumchi*! The *dumchi*!" in a shrill voice. Then he returned and drove on, while the Englishman wondered into what land of lunatics he was heading. At an average speed of six miles an hour, it is possible to see a great deal of the country; and, under brilliant moonlight, Mewar was desolately beautiful. There was no night traffic on the road, no one except the patient sowar, his shadow an inky blot on white, cantering twenty yards behind. Once the tonga strayed into a company of date trees that fringed the path, and once rattled through a little town, and once the ponies shied at what the driver said was a rock. But It jumped up in the moonlight and went away.

Then came a great blasted heath whereon nothing was more than six inches high—a wilderness covered with grass and low thorn; and

here, as nearly as might be midway between Chitor and Udaipur, the Wheel of Fate, which had been for some time beating against the side of the tonga, came off, and Her Majesty's mails, two bags including parcels, collapsed on the wayside: while the Englishman repented him that he had neglected the omens of the vultures and the raven, the low–caste man and the mad driver.

There was a consultation and an examination of the wheel, but the whole tonga was rotten, and the axle was smashed and the axle pins were bent and nearly red–hot. "It is nothing," said the driver, "the mail often does this. What is a wheel?" He took a big stone and began hammering proudly on the tire, to show that that at least was sound. A hasty court–martial revealed that there was absolutely not one single relief vehicle on the whole road between Chitor and Udaipur.

Now this wilderness was so utterly waste that not even the barking of a dog or the sound of a night–fowl could be heard. Luckily the Thakur had, some twenty miles back, stepped out to smoke by the roadside, and his tonga had been passed meanwhile. The sowar was sent back to find that tonga and bring it on. He cantered into the haze of the moonlight and disappeared. Then said the driver: "Had there been no tonga behind us, I should have put the mails on a horse, because the Sirkar's mail cannot stop." The Englishman sat down upon the parcels–bag, for he felt that there was trouble coming. The driver looked East and West and said: "I, too, will go and see if the tonga can be found, for the Sirkar's dak cannot stop. Meantime, oh, Sahib, do you take care of the mails—one bag and one bag of parcels." So he ran swiftly into the haze of the moonlight and was lost, and the Englishman was left alone in charge of Her Majesty's mails, two unhappy ponies, and a lop–sided tonga. He lit a fire, for the night was bitterly cold, and only mourned that he could not destroy the whole of the territories of His Highness, the Maharana of Udaipur. But he managed to raise a very fine blaze, before he reflected that all this trouble was his own fault for wandering into Native States undesirous of Englishmen.

The ponies coughed dolorously from time to time, but they could not lift the weight of a dead silence that seemed to be crushing the earth. After an interval measurable by centuries, sowar, driver, and Thakur's tonga reappeared; the latter full to the brim and bubbling over with humanity and bedding. "We will now," said the driver, not deigning to notice the Englishman who had been on guard over the mails, "put the Sirkar's mail into this tonga and go forward." Amiable heathen! He was going—he said so—to leave the Englishman to wait in the Sahara, for certainly thirty hours and perhaps forty–eight. Tongas are scarce on the Udaipur road. There are a few occasions in life when it is justifiable to delay Her Majesty's Mail. This was one of

them. Seating himself upon the parcels–bag, the Englishman cried in what was intended to be a very terrible voice, but the silence soaked it up and left only a thin trickle of sound, that any one who touched the bags would be hit with a stick, several times, over the head. The bags were the only link between him and the civilisation he had so rashly foregone. And there was a pause.

The Thakur put his head out of the tonga and spoke shrilly in Mewari. The Englishman replied in English–Urdu. The Thakur withdrew his head, and from certain grunts that followed seemed to be wakening his retainers. Then two men fell sleepily out of the tonga and walked into the night. "Come in," said the Thakur, "you and your baggage. My pistol is in that corner; be careful." The Englishman, taking a mail–bag in one hand for safety's sake,—the wilderness inspires an Anglo–Indian Cockney, with unreasoning fear,—climbed into the tonga, which was then loaded far beyond Plimsoll mark, and the procession resumed its journey. Every one in the vehicle—it seemed as full as the railway carriage that held Alice through the Looking–Glass—was *Sahib* and *Hazur*. Except the Englishman. He was simple *tum* (thou), and a revolver, Army pattern, was printing every diamond in the chequer–work of its handle, on his right hip. When men desired him to move, they prodded him with the handles of *tulwars* till they had coiled him into an uneasy lump. Then they slept upon him, or cannoned against him as the tonga bumped. It was an *aram* tonga, a tonga for ease. That was the bitterest thought of all!

In due season the harness began to break once every five minutes, and the driver vowed that the wheels would give way also.

After eight hours in one position, it is excessively difficult to walk, still more difficult to climb up an unknown road into a dak–bungalow; but he who has sought sleep on an arsenal and under the bodies of burly Rajputs can do it. The grey dawn brought Udaipur and a French bedstead. As the tonga jingled away, the Englishman heard the familiar crack of broken harness. So he was not the Jonah he had been taught to consider himself all through that night of penance!

A jackal sat in the verandah and howled him to sleep, and he dreamed that he caught a Viceroy under the walls of Chitor and beat him with a *tulwar* till he turned into a dak–pony whose near foreleg was perpetually coming off and who would say nothing but *tum* when he was asked why he had not built a railway from Chitor to Udaipur.

VII
Touching the Children of the Sun and Their City, and the Hat-marked Caste and Their Merits, and a Good Man's Works in the Wilderness

It was worth a night's discomfort and revolver–beds to sleep upon —this city of the Suryavansi, hidden among the hills that encompass the great Pichola lake. Truly, the King who governs to–day is wise in his determination to have no railroad to his capital. His predecessor was more or less enlightened, and had he lived a few years longer, would have brought the iron horse through the Dobarri—the green gate which is the entrance of the Girwa or girdle of hills around Udaipur; and, with the train, would have come the tourist who would have scratched his name upon the Temple of Garuda and laughed horse–laughs upon the lake. Let us, therefore, be thankful that the capital of Mewar is hard to reach.

Each man in this land who has any claims to respectability walks armed, carrying his tulwar sheathed in his hand, or hung by a short sling of cotton passing over the shoulder, under his left armpit. His matchlock, or smooth–bore, if he has one, is borne naked on the shoulder.

Now it is possible to carry any number of lethal weapons without being actually dangerous. An unhandy revolver, for instance, may be worn for years, and, at the end, accomplish nothing more noteworthy than the murder of its owner. But the Rajput's weapons are not meant for display. The Englishman caught a camel–driver who talked to him in Mewari, which is a heathenish dialect, something like Multani to listen to; and the man, very gracefully and courteously, handed him his sword and matchlock, the latter a heavy stump–stock arrangement without pretence of sights. The blade was as sharp as a razor, and the gun in perfect working order. The coiled fuse on the stock was charred at the end, and the curled ram's–horn powder–horn opened as readily as a much–handled whisky–flask. Unfortunately, ignorance of Mewari prevented conversation; so the camel–driver resumed his accoutrements and jogged forward on his beast—a superb black one, with the short curled *hubshee* hair—while the Englishman went to the city, which is built on hills on the borders of the lake. By the way, everything in Udaipur is built on a hill. There is no level ground in the place, except the Durbar Gardens, of which more hereafter. Because colour holds the eye more than form, the first thing noticeable was

neither temple nor fort, but an ever–recurring picture, painted in the rudest form of native art, of a man on horseback armed with a lance, charging an elephant–of–war. As a rule, the elephant was depicted on one side the house–door and the rider on the other. There was no representation of an army behind. The figures stood alone upon the whitewash on house and wall and gate, again and again and again. A highly intelligent priest grunted that it was a picture; a private of the Maharana's regular army suggested that it was an elephant; while a wheat–seller, his sword at his side, was equally certain that it was a Raja. Beyond that point, his knowledge did not go. The explanation of the picture is this. In the days when Raja Maun of Amber put his sword at Akbar's service and won for him great kingdoms, Akbar sent an army against Mewar, whose then ruler was Pertap Singh, most famous of all the princes of Mewar. Selim, Akbar's son, led the army of the Toork; the Rajputs met them at the pass of Huldighat and fought till one–half of their band was slain. Once, in the press of battle, Pertap on his great horse, Chytak, came within striking distance of Selim's elephant, and slew the mahout, but Selim escaped, to become Jehangir afterwards, and the Rajputs were broken. That was three hundred years ago, and men have reduced the picture to a sort of diagram that the painter dashes in, in a few minutes, without, it would seem, knowing what he is commemorating.

Thinking of these things, the Englishman made shift to get to the city, and presently came to a tall gate, the gate of the Sun, on which the elephant–spikes, that he had seen rotted with rust at Amber, were new and pointed and effective. The City gates are said to be shut at night, and there is a story of a Viceroy's Guard–of–Honour which arrived before daybreak, being compelled to crawl ignominiously man by man through a little wicket–gate, while the horses had to wait without till sunrise. But a civilised yearning for the utmost advantages of octroi, and not a fierce fear of robbery and wrong, is at the bottom of the continuance of this custom. The walls of the City are loopholed for musketry, but there seem to be no mounting for guns, and the moat without the walls is dry and gives cattle pasture. Coarse rubble in concrete faced with stone makes the walls moderately strong.

Internally, the City is surprisingly clean, though with the exception of the main street, paved after the fashion of Jullundur, of which, men say, the pavement was put down in the time of Alexander and worn by myriads of naked feet into deep barrels and grooves. In the case of Udaipur, the feet of the passengers have worn the rock veins that crop out everywhere, smooth and shiny; and in the rains the narrow gullies must spout like fire–hoses. The people have been untouched by cholera for four years, proof that Providence looks after those who do not look after themselves, for Neemuch Cantonment, a

hundred miles away, suffered grievously last summer. "And what do you make in Udaipur?" "Swords," said the man in the shop, throwing down an armful of *tulwars*, *kuttars*, and *khandas* on the stones. "Do you want any? Look here!" Hereat, he took up one of the commoner swords and flourished it in the sunshine. Then he bent it double, and, as it sprang straight, began to make it "speak." Arm–venders in Udaipur are a sincere race, for they sell to people who really use their wares. The man in the shop was rude—distinctly so. His first flush of professional enthusiasm abated, he took stock of the Englishman and said calmly: "What do *you* want with a sword?" Then he picked up his goods and retreated, while certain small boys, who deserved a smacking, laughed riotously from the coping of a little temple hard by. Swords seem to be the sole manufacture of the place. At least, none of the inhabitants the Englishman spoke to could think of any other.

There is a certain amount of personal violence in and about the State, or else where would be the good of the weapons? There are occasionally dacoities more or less important; but these are not often heard of, and, indeed, there is no special reason why they should be dragged into the light of an unholy publicity, for the land governs itself in its own way, and is always in its own way, which is by no means ours, very happy. The Thakurs live, each in his own castle on some rock–faced hill, much as they lived in the days of Tod; though their chances of distinguishing themselves, except in the school, and dispensary line, are strictly limited. Nominally, they pay *chutoond*, or a sixth of their revenues to the State, and are under feudal obligations to supply their Head with so many horsemen per thousand rupees; but whether the *chutoond* justifies its name and what is the exact extent of the "tail" leviable, they, and perhaps the Rajputana Agency, alone know. They are quiet, give no trouble except to the wild boar, and personally are magnificent men to look at. The Rajput shows his breeding in his hands and feet, which are almost disproportionately small, and as well shaped as those of a woman. His stirrups and sword–handles are even more unusable by Westerns than those elsewhere in India, whereas the Bhil's knife–handle gives as large a grip as an English one. Now the little Bhil is an aborigine, which is humiliating to think of. His tongue, which may frequently be heard in the City, seems to possess some variant of the Zulu click, which gives it a weird and unearthly character. From the main gate of the City the Englishman climbed uphill towards the Palace and the Jugdesh Temple built by one Juggat Singh at the beginning of the last century. This building must be—but ignorance is a bad guide—Jain in character. From basement to the stone socket of the temple flagstaff, it is carved in high relief with elephants, men, gods, and monsters in friezes of wearying profusion.

The management of the temple have daubed a large portion of the building with whitewash, for which their revenues should be "cut" for a year or two. The main shrine holds a large brazen image of Garuda, and, in the corners of the courtyard of the main pile, are shrines to Mahadeo, and the jovial, pot–bellied Ganesh. There is no repose in this architecture, and the entire effect is one of repulsion; for the clustered figures of man and brute seem always on the point of bursting into unclean, wriggling life. But it may be that the builders of this form of house desired to put the fear of all their many gods into the hearts of the worshippers.

From the temple whose steps are worn smooth by the feet of men, and whose courts are full of the faint smell of stale flowers and old incense, the Englishman went to the Palaces which crown the highest hill overlooking the City. Here, too, whitewash had been unsparingly applied, but the excuse was that the stately fronts and the pierced screens were built of a perishable stone which needed protection against the weather. One projecting window in the façade of the main palace had been treated with Minton tiles. Luckily it was too far up the wall for anything more than the colour to be visible, and the pale blue against the pure white was effective.

A picture of Ganesh looks out over the main courtyard, which is entered by a triple gate, and hard by is the place where the King's elephants fight over a low masonry wall. In the side of the hill on which the Palaces stand is built stabling for horses and elephants—proof that the architects of old must have understood their business thoroughly. The Palace is not a "show place," and, consequently, the Englishman did not see much of the interior. But he passed through open gardens with tanks and pavilions, very cool and restful, till he came suddenly upon the Pichola lake, and forgot altogether about the Palace. He found a sheet of steel–blue water, set in purple and grey hills, bound in, on one side, by marble bunds, the fair white walls of the Palace, and the grey, time–worn ones of the city; and, on the other, fading away through the white of shallow water, and the soft green of weed, marsh, and rank–pastured river–field, into the land.

To enjoy open water thoroughly, live for a certain number of years barred from anything better than the yearly swell and shrinkage of one of the Five Rivers, and then come upon two and a half miles of solid, restful lake, with a cool wind blowing off it and little waves spitting against the piers of a veritable, albeit hideously ugly, boat–house. On the faith of an exile from the Sea, you will not stay long among Palaces, be they never so lovely, or in little rooms panelled with Dutch tiles.

And here follows a digression. There is no life so good as the life of a loafer who travels by rail and road; for all things and all people

are kind to him. From the chill miseries of a dak–bungalow where they slew one hen with as much parade as the French guillotined Pranzini, to the well–ordered sumptuousness of the Residency, was a step bridged over by kindly and unquestioning hospitality. So it happened that the Englishman was not only able to go upon the lake in a soft–cushioned boat, with everything handsome about him, but might, had he chosen, have killed wild–duck with which the lake swarms.

The mutter of water under a boat's nose was a pleasant thing to hear once more. Starting at the head of the lake, he found himself shut out from sight of the main sheet of water in a loch bounded by a sunk, broken bund to steer across which was a matter of some nicety. Beyond that lay a second pool, spanned by a narrow–arched bridge built, men said, long before the City of the Rising Sun, which is little more than three hundred years old. The bridge connects the City with Brahmapura—a whiter walled enclosure filled with many Brahmins and ringing with the noise of their conches. Beyond the bridge, the body of the lake, with the City running down to it, comes into full view; and Providence has arranged for the benefit of such as delight in colours, that the Rajputni shall wear the most striking tints that she can buy in the bazaars, in order that she may beautify the ghâts where she comes to bathe.

The bathing–ledge at the foot of the City wall was lighted with women clad in raw vermilion, dull red, indigo and sky–blue, saffron and pink and turquoise; the water faithfully doubling everything. But the first impression was of the unreality of the sight, for the Englishman found himself thinking of the Simla Fine Arts Exhibition and the overdaring amateurs who had striven to reproduce scenes such as these. Then a woman rose up, and clasping her hands behind her head, looked at the passing boat, and the ripples spread out from her waist, in blinding white silver, far across the water. As a picture, a daringly insolent picture, it was superb.

The boat turned aside to shores where huge turtles were lying, and a stork had built her a nest, big as a haycock, in a withered tree, and a bevy of coots were flapping and gabbling in the weeds or between great leaves of the *Victoria regia*—an "escape" from the State Gardens. Here were divers and waders, kingfishers and snaky–necked birds of the cormorant family, but no duck. They had seen the guns in the boat and were flying to and fro in companies across the lake, or settling—wise things!—in the glare of the sun on the water. The lake was swarming with them, but they seemed to know exactly how far a twelve–bore would carry. Perhaps their knowledge had been gained from the Englishman at the Residency. Later, as the sun left the lake, and the hills began to glow like opals, the boat made her way to the

shallow side of the lake, through fields of watergrass and dead lotus–raffle that rose as high as the bows, and clung lovingly about the rudder, and parted with the noise of silk when it is torn. There she waited for the fall of twilight when the duck would come home to bed, and the Englishman sprawled upon the cushions in deep content and laziness, as he looked across to where two marble Palaces floated upon the waters, and saw all the glory and beauty of the City, and wondered whether Tod, in cocked hat and stiff stock, had ever come shooting among the reeds, and, if so, how in the world he had ever managed to bowl over….

"Duck and drake, by Jove! Confiding beasts, weren't they. Hi! Lalla, jump out and get them!" It was a brutal thing, this double–barrelled murder perpetrated in the silence of the marsh when the kingly wild–duck came back from his wanderings with his mate at his side, but—but—the birds were very good to eat.

If the Venetian owned the Pichola Sagar he might say with justice: "See it and die." But it is better to live and go to dinner, and strike into a new life—that of the men who bear the hat–mark on their brow as plainly as the well–born native carries the *trisul* of Shiva.

They are of the same caste as the toilers on the Frontier—tough, bronzed men, with wrinkles at the corners of the eyes, gotten by looking across much sun–glare. When they would speak of horses they mention Arab ponies, and their talk, for the most part, drifts Bombaywards, or to Abu, which is their Simla. By these things the traveller may see that he is far away from the Presidency; and will presently learn that he is in a land where the railway is an incident and not an indispensable luxury. Folk tell strange stories of drives in bullock–carts in the rains, of breakdowns in nullahs fifty miles from everywhere, and of elephants that used to sink for rest and refreshment half–way across swollen streams. Every place here seems fifty miles from everywhere, and the legs of a horse are regarded as the only natural means of locomotion. Also, and this to the Indian Cockney, who is accustomed to the bleached or office man, is curious, there are to be found many veritable "tiger–men"—not story–spinners, but such as have, in their wanderings from Bikaneer to Indore, dropped their tiger in the way of business. They are enthusiastic over princelings of little known fiefs, lords of austere estates perched on the tops of unthrifty hills, hard riders, and good sportsmen. And five, six, yes fully nine hundred miles to the northward, lives the sister branch of the same caste—the men who swear by Pathan, Biluch, and Brahui, with whom they have shot or broken bread.

There is a saying in Upper India that the more desolate the country, the greater the certainty of finding a Padre–Sahib. The proverb seems to hold good in Udaipur, where the Scotch Presbyterian

Mission have a post, and others at Todgarh to the north and elsewhere. To arrive, under Providence, at the cure of souls through the curing of bodies certainly seems the rational method of conversion; and this is exactly what the Missions are doing. Their Padre in Udaipur is also an M.D., and of him a rather striking tale is told. Conceiving that the City could bear another hospital in addition to the State one, he took furlough, went home, and there, by crusade and preaching, raised sufficient money for the scheme, so that none might say that he was beholden to the State. Returning, he built his hospital, a very model of neatness and comfort, and, opening the operation–book, announced his readiness to see any one and every one who was sick. How the call was and is now responded to, the dry records of that book will show; and the name of the Padre–Sahib is honoured, as these ears have heard, throughout Udaipur and far around. The faith that sends a man into the wilderness, and the secular energy which enables him to cope with an ever–growing demand for medical aid, must, in time, find their reward. If patience and unwearying self–sacrifice carry any merit, they should do so soon. To–day the people are willing enough to be healed, and the general influence of the Padre–Sahib is very great. But beyond that…. Still it was impossible to judge aright.

VIII
Divers Passages of Speech and Action Whence the Nature, Arts, and Disposition of the King and His Subjects May be Observed

In this land men tell "sad stories of the death of Kings" not easily found elsewhere; and also speak of *sati*, which is generally supposed to be out of date in a manner which makes it seem very near and vivid. Be pleased to listen to some of the tales, but with all the names cut out, because a King has just as much right to have his family affairs respected as has a British householder paying income tax.

Once upon a time, that is to say when the British power was well established in the land and there were railways, was a King who lay dying for many days, and all, including the Englishmen about him, knew that his end was certain. But he had chosen to lie in an outer court or pleasure–house of his Palace; and with him were some twenty of his favourite wives. The place in which he lay was very near to the City; and there was a fear that his womankind should, on his death, going mad with grief, cast off their veils and run out into the streets, uncovered before all men. In which case nothing, not even the power of the Press, and the locomotive, and the telegraph, and cheap education and enlightened municipal councils, could have saved them from the burning–pyre, for they were the wives of a King. So the Political did his best to induce the dying man to go to the Fort of the City, a safe place close to the regular zenana, where all the women could be kept within walls. He said that the air was better in the Fort, but the King refused; and that he would recover in the Fort; but the King refused. After some days, the latter turned and said: "*Why* are you so keen, Sahib, upon getting my old bones up to the Fort?" Driven to his last defences, the Political said simply: "Well, Maharana Sahib, the place is close to the road, you see, and … " The King saw and said: "Oh, *that's* it? I've been puzzling my brain for four days to find out what on earth you were driving at. I'll go to–night." "But there may be some difficulty," began the Political. "You think so," said the King. "If I only hold up my little finger, the women will obey me. Go now, and come back in five minutes, and all will be ready for departure." As a matter of fact, the Political withdrew for the space of fifteen minutes, and gave orders that the conveyances which he had kept in readiness day and night should be got ready. In fifteen minutes those twenty women, with their handmaidens, were packed and ready for departure; and the King died later at the Fort, and nothing happened.

Here the Englishman asked why a frantic woman must of necessity become a *sati*, and felt properly abashed when he was told that she *must*. There was nothing else for her if she went out unveiled.

The rush–out forces the matter. And, indeed, if you consider the matter from the Rajput point of view it does.

Then followed a very grim tale of the death of another King; of the long vigil by his bedside, before he was taken off the bed to die upon the ground; of the shutting of a certain mysterious door behind the bed–head, which shutting was followed by a rustle of women's dress; of a walk on the top of the palace, to escape the heated air of the sick room; and then, in the grey dawn, the wail upon wail breaking from the zenana as the news of the King's death went in. "I never wish to hear anything more horrible and awful in my life. You could see nothing. You could only hear the poor wretches," said the Political, with a shiver.

The last resting–place of the Maharanas of Udaipur is at Ahar, a little village two miles east of the City. Here they go down in their robes of state, their horse following behind, and here the Political saw, after the death of a Maharana, the dancing–girls dancing before the poor white ashes, the musicians playing among the cenotaphs, and the golden hookah, sword, and water–vessel laid out for the naked soul doomed to hover twelve days round the funeral pyre, before it could depart on its journey toward a fresh birth. Once, in a neighbouring State it is said, one of the dancing–girls stole a march in the next world's precedence and her lord's affections, upon the legitimate queens. The affair happened, by the way, after the Mutiny, and was accomplished with great pomp in the light of day. Subsequently those who might have stopped it but did not, were severely punished. The girl said that she had no one to look to but the dead man, and followed him, to use Tod's formula, "through the flames." It would be curious to know whether *sati* is altogether abolished among these lonely hills in the walled holds of the Thakurs.

But to return from the burning–ground to modern Udaipur, as at present worked under the Maharana and his Prime Minister Rae Punna Lal, *C. I. E.* To begin with, His Highness is a racial anomaly in that, judged by the strictest European standard, he is a man of temperate life, the husband of one wife whom he married before he was chosen to the throne after the death of the Maharana Sujjun Singh in 1884. Sujjun Singh died childless and gave no hint of his desires as to succession and—omitting all the genealogical and political reasons which would drive a man mad—Futteh Singh was chosen, by the Thakurs, from the Seorati Branch of the family which Sangram Singh II. founded. He is thus a younger son of a younger branch of a younger family, which lucid statement should suffice to explain everything.

The man who could deliberately unravel the succession of any one of the Rajput States would be perfectly capable of explaining the politics of all the Frontier tribes from Jumrood to Quetta.

Roughly speaking, the Maharana and the Prime Minister—in whose family the office has been hereditary for many generations—divide the power of the State. They control, more or less, the Mahand Raj Sabha or Council of Direction and Revision. This is composed of many of the Rawats and Thakurs of the State, *and* the Poet Laureate who, under a less genial administration, would be presumably the Registrar. There are also District Officers, Officers of Customs, Superintendents of the Mint, Masters of the Horses, and Supervisor of Doles, which last is pretty and touching. The State officers itself, and the Englishman's investigations failed to unearth any Bengalis. The Commandant of the State Army, about five thousand men of all arms, is a retired non–commissioned officer, a Mr. Lonergan; who, as the medals on his breast attest, has done the State some service, and now in his old age rejoices in the local rank of Major–General, and teaches the Maharaja's guns to make uncommonly good practice. The Infantry are smart and well set up, while the Cavalry—rare thing in Native States—have a distinct notion of keeping their accoutrements clean. They are, further, well mounted on light, wiry Mewar and Kathiawar horses. Incidentally, it may be mentioned that the Pathan comes down with his pickings from the Punjab to Udaipur, and finds a market there for animals that were much better employed in Our service—but the complaint is a stale one. Let us see, later on, what the Jodhpur stables hold; and then formulate an indictment against the Government. So much for the indigenous administration of Udaipur. The one drawback in the present Maharaja, from the official point of view, is his want of education. He is a thoroughly good man, but was not brought up with the kingship before his eyes, consequently he is not an English–speaking man.

There is a story told of him which is worth the repeating. An Englishman who flattered himself that he could speak the vernacular fairly well, paid him a visit and discoursed with a round mouth. The Maharana heard him politely, and turning to a satellite, demanded a translation; which was given. Then said the Maharana:—"Speak to him in *Angrezi*." The *Angrezi* spoken by the interpreter was Urdu as the Sahibs speak it, and the Englishman, having ended his conference, departed abashed. But this backwardness is eminently suited to a place like Udaipur, and a European prince is not always a desirable thing. The curious and even startling simplicity of his life is worth preserving. Here is a specimen of one of his days. Rising at four—and the dawn can be bitterly chill—he bathes and prays after the custom of his race, and at six is ready to take in hand the first instalment of

the day's work which comes before him through his Prime Minister, and occupies him for three or four hours till the first meal of the day is ready. At two o'clock he attends the Mahand Raj Sabha, and works till five, retiring at a healthily primitive hour. He is said to have his hand fairly, firmly upon the reins of rule, and to know as much as most monarchs know of the way in which his revenues—some thirty lakhs—are disposed of. The Prime Minister's career has been a chequered and interesting one, including a dismissal from power (this was worked by the Queens from behind the screen), an arrest, and an attack with swords which all but ended in his murder. He has not so much power as his predecessors had, for the reason that the present Maharaja allows little but tiger–shooting to distract him from the supervision of the State. His Highness, by the way, is a first–class shot and has bagged eighteen tigers already. He preserves his game carefully, and permission to kill tigers is not readily obtainable.

A curious instance of the old order giving place to the new is in process of evolution and deserves notice. The Prime Minister's son, Futteh Lal, a boy of twenty years old, has been educated at the Mayo College, Ajmir, and speaks and writes English. There are few native officials in the State who do this; and the consequence is that the lad has won a very fair insight into State affairs, and knows generally what is going forward both in the Eastern and Western spheres of the little Court. In time he may qualify for direct administrative powers, and Udaipur will be added to the list of the States that are governed English fashion. What the end will be, after three generations of Princes and Dewans have been put through the mill of the Rajkumar Colleges, those who live will learn.

More interesting is the question, For how long can the vitality of a people whose life was arms be suspended? Men in the North say that, by the favour of the Government which brings peace, the Sikh Sirdars are rotting on their lands; and the Rajput Thakurs say of themselves that they are growing rusty. The old, old problem forces itself on the most unreflective mind at every turn in the gay streets of Udaipur. A Frenchman might write: "Behold there the horse of the Rajput—foaming, panting, caracoling, but always fettered with his head so majestic upon his bosom so amply filled with a generous heart. He rages, but he does not advance. See there the destiny of the Rajput who bestrides him, and upon whose left flank bounds the sabre useless—the haberdashery of the ironmonger only! Pity the horse in reason, for that life there is his *raison d'être*. Pity ten thousand times more the Rajput, for he has no *raison d'être*. He is an anachronism in a blue turban."

The Gaul might be wrong, but Tod wrote things which seem to support this view, in the days when he wished to make "buffer–states"

of the land he loved so well.

Let us visit the Durbar Gardens, where little naked Cupids are trampling upon fountains of fatted fish, all in bronze, where there are cypresses and red paths, and a deer–park full of all varieties of deer, besides two growling, fluffy little panther cubs, a black panther who is the Prince of Darkness and a gentleman, and a terrace–full of tigers, bears, and Guzerat lions brought from the King of Oudh's sale.

IX
Of the Pig-drive Which Was a Panther-killing, and of the Departure to Chitor

Above the Durbar Gardens lie low hills, in which the Maharana keeps, very strictly guarded, his pig and his deer, and anything else that may find shelter in the low scrub or under the scattered boulders. These preserves are scientifically parcelled out with high, red–stone walls; and here and there are dotted tiny shooting–stands—masonry sentry–boxes, in which five or six men may sit at ease and shoot. It had been arranged to entertain the Englishmen who were gathered at the Residency to witness the investiture of the King with the G. C. S. I. —that there should be a little pig–drive in front of the Kala Odey or black shooting–box. The Rajput is a man and a brother, in respect that he will ride, shoot, eat pig, and drink strong waters like an Englishman. Of the pig–hunting he makes almost a religious duty, and of the wine–drinking no less. Read how desperately they used to ride in Udaipur at the beginning of the century when Tod, always in his cocked hat to be sure, counted up the tale of accidents at the end of the day's sport.

There is something unfair in shooting pig; but each man who went out consoled himself with the thought that it was utterly impossible to ride the brutes up the almost perpendicular hillsides, or down rocky ravines, and that he individually would only go "just for the fun of the thing." Those who stayed behind made rude remarks on the subject of "pork butchers," and the dangers that attended shooting from a balcony. There are ways and ways of slaying pig—from the orthodox method which begins with "*The Boar—the Boar—the mighty Boar!*" overnight, and ends with a shaky bridle–hand next morn, to the sober and solitary pot–shot at dawn, from a railway embankment running through river marsh; but the perfect way is this. Get a large, four–horse break, and drive till you meet an unlimited quantity of pad–elephants waiting at the foot of rich hill–preserves. Mount slowly and with dignity, and go in swinging procession, by the marble–faced border of one of the most lovely lakes on earth. Strike off on a semi–road, semi–hill–torrent path through unthrifty, thorny jungle, and so climb up and up and up, till you see, spread like a map below, the lake and the Palace and the City, hemmed in by the sea of hills that lies between Udaipur and Mount Abu a hundred miles away. Then take your seat in a comfortable chair, in a fine two–storied Grand Stand, with an awning spread atop to keep off the sun, while the Rawat of Amet and the Prime Minister's heir—no less—invite you to

take your choice of the many rifles spread on a ledge at the front of the building. This, gentlemen who screw your pet ponies at early dawn after the sounder that vanishes into cover soon as sighted, or painfully follow the tiger through the burning heats of Mewar in May, this is shooting after the fashion of Ouida—in musk and ambergris and patchouli.

It is demoralising. One of the best and hardest riders of the Lahore Tent Club in the old days, as the boars of Bouli Lena Singh knew well, said openly: "This is a first–class scheme," and fell to testing his triggers as though he had been a pot–hunter from his birth. Derision and threats of exposure moved him not. "Give me an arm–chair!" said he. "This is the proper way to deal with pig!" And he put up his feet on the ledge and stretched himself.

There were many weapons to choose from the double–barrelled '500 Express, whose bullet is a tearing, rending shell, to the Rawat of Amet's regulation military Martini–Henri. A profane public at the Residency had suggested clubs and saws as amply sufficient for the work in hand. Here they were moved by envy, which passion was ten–fold increased when—but this comes later on. The beat was along a deep gorge in the hills, flanked on either crest by stone walls, manned with beaters. Immediately opposite the shooting–box, the wall on the upper or higher hill made a sharp turn downhill, contracting the space through which the pig would have to pass to a gut which was variously said to be from one hundred and fifty to four hundred yards across. Most of the shooting was up or down hill.

A philanthropic desire not to murder more Bhils than were absolutely necessary to maintain a healthy current of human life in the Hilly Tracts, coupled with a well–founded dread of the hinder, or horse, end of a double–barrelled '500 Express which would be sure to go off both barrels together, led the Englishman to take a gunless seat in the background. Then a silence fell upon the party, and very far away up the gorge the heated afternoon air was cut by the shrill tremolo squeal of the Bhil beaters. Now a man may be in no sort or fashion a *shikari*—may hold Buddhistic objections to the slaughter of living things—but there is something in the extraordinary noise of an agitated Bhil, which makes even the most peaceful mortals get up and yearn, like Tartarin of Tarescon for "lions," always at a safe distance be it understood. As the beat drew nearer, under the squealing—the "*ul–al–lu–lu–lu*"—was heard a long–drawn bittern–like boom of "*So–oor!*" "*So–oor!*" (Pig! Pig!) and the crashing of boulders. The guns rose in their places, forgetting that each and all had merely come "to see the fun," and began to fumble among the little mounds of cartridges under the chairs. Presently, tripping delicately over the rocks, a pig stepped out of a cactus–bush, and the fusillade began. The dust flew and the

branches chipped, but the pig went on—a blue–grey shadow almost undistinguishable against the rocks, and took no harm. "Sighting shots," said the guns, sulkily. The beat came nearer, and then the listener discovered what the bubbling scream was like; for he forgot straightway about the beat and went back to the dusk of an Easter Monday in the Gardens of the Crystal Palace before the bombardment of Kars, "set piece ten thousand feet square" had been illuminated, and about five hundred 'Arries were tickling a thousand 'Arriets. Their giggling and nothing else was the noise of the Bhil. So curiously does Sydenham and Western Rajputana meet. Then came another pig, who was smitten to the death and rolled down among the bushes, drawing his last breath in a human and horrible manner.

But full on the crest of the hill, blown along—there is no other word to describe it—like a ball of thistle–down, passed a brown shadow, and men cried: "*Bagheera*," or "Panther!" according to their nationalities, and blazed. The shadow leaped the wall that had turned the pig downhill, and vanished among the cactus. "Never mind," said the Prime Minister's son, consolingly, "we'll beat the other side of the hill afterwards and get him yet." "Oh, he's a mile off by this time," said the guns; but the Rawat of Amet, a magnificent young man, smiled a sweet smile and said nothing. More pig passed and were slain, and many more broke back through the beaters who presently came through the cover in scores. They were in russet green and red uniform, each man bearing a long spear, and the hillside was turned on the instant to a camp of Robin Hood's foresters. Then they brought up the dead from behind bushes and under rocks—among others a twenty–seven–inch brute who bore on his flank (all pigs shot in a beat are *ex–officio* boars) a hideous, half–healed scar, big as a man's hand, of a bullet wound. Express bullets are ghastly things in their effects, for, as the *shikari* is never tired of demonstrating, they knock the inside of animals into pulp.

The second beat, of the reverse side of the hill, had barely begun when the panther returned—uneasily as if something were keeping her back—much lower down the hill. Then the face of the Rawat of Amet changed, as he brought his gun up to his shoulder. Looking at him as he fired, one forgot all about the Mayo College at which he had been educated, and remembered only some trivial and out–of–date affairs, in which his forefathers had been concerned, when a bridegroom, with his bride at his side, charged down the slope of the Chitor road and died among Akbar's men. There are stories connected with the House of Amet, which are told in Mewar to–day. The young man's face, for as short a time as it takes to pull trigger and see where the bullet falls, was a white light upon all these tales.

Then the mask shut down, as he clicked out the cartridge, and,

very sweetly, gave it as his opinion that some other gun, not his own, had bagged the panther who lay shot through the spine, feebly trying to drag herself downhill into cover. It is an awful thing to see a big beast die, when the soul is wrenched out of the struggling body in ten seconds. Wild horses shall not make the Englishman disclose the exact number of shots that were fired. It is enough to say that four Englishmen, now scattered to the four winds of heaven, are each morally certain that he and he alone shot that panther. In time, when distance and the mirage of the sands of Uodhpur shall have softened the harsh outlines of truth, the Englishman who did *not* fire a shot will come to believe that he was the real slayer, and will carefully elaborate that lie.

A few minutes after the murder, a two–year–old cub came trotting along the hillside, and was bowled over by a very pretty shot behind the left ear and through the palate. Then the beaters' lances showed through the bushes, and the guns began to realise that they had allowed to escape, or had driven back by their fire, a multitude of pig.

This ended the beat, and the procession returned to the Residency to heap dead panthers upon those who had called them "pork butchers," and to stir up the lake of envy with the torpedo of brilliant description. The Englishman's attempt to compare the fusillade which greeted the panther to the continuous drumming of a ten–barrelled Nordenfeldt was, however, coldly received. Thus harshly is truth treated all the world over.

And then, after a little time, came the end, and a return to the road in search of new countries. But shortly before the departure, the Padre–Sahib, who knows every one in Udaipur, read a sermon in a sentence. The Maharana's investiture, which has already been described in the Indian papers, had taken place, and the carriages, duly escorted by the Erinpura Horse, were returning to the Residency. In a niche of waste land, under the shadow of the main gate, a place strewn with rubbish and shards of pottery, a dilapidated old man was trying to control his horse and a *hookah* on the saddle–bow. The blundering garron had been made restive by the rush past, and the *hookah* all but fell from the hampered hands. "See that man," said the Padre, tersely. "That's — Singh. He intrigued for the throne not so very long ago." It was a pitiful little picture, and needed no further comment.

For the benefit of the loafer it should be noted that Udaipur will never be pleasant or accessible until the present Mail Contractors have been hanged. They are extortionate and untruthful, and their one set of harness and one tonga are as rotten as pears. However, the weariness of the flesh must be great indeed, to make the wanderer

blind to the beauties of a journey by clear starlight and in biting cold to Chitor. About six miles from Udaipur, the granite hills close in upon the road, and the air grows warmer until, with a rush and a rattle, the tonga swings through the great Dobarra, the gate in the double circle of hills round Udaipur on to the pastures of Mewar. More than once the Girwa has been a death–trap to those who rashly entered it; and an army has been cut up on the borders of the Pichola Lake. Even now the genius of the place is strong upon the hills, and as he felt the cold air from the open ground without the barrier, the Englishman found himself repeating the words of one of the Hat–marked tribe whose destiny kept him within the Dobarra. "You must have a hobby of some kind in these parts or you'll die." Very lovely is Udaipur, and thrice pleasant are a few days spent within her gates, but … read what Tod said who stayed two years behind the Dobarra, and accepted the deserts of Marwar as a delightful change.

It is good to be free, a wanderer upon the highways, knowing not what to–morrow will bring forth—whether the walled–in niceties of an English household, rich in all that makes life fair and desirable, or a sleepless night in the society of a goods–*cum*–booking–office–*cum*–parcels–clerk, on fifteen rupees a month, who tells in stilted English the story of his official life, while the telegraph gibbers like a maniac once in an hour and then is dumb, and the pariah–dogs fight and howl over the cotton–bales on the platform.

Verily, there is no life like life on the road—when the skies are cool and all men are kind.

X
A Little of the History of Chitor, and the Malpractices of a She-elephant

There is a certain want of taste, an almost actual indecency, in seeing the sun rise on the earth. Until the heat–haze begins and the distances thicken, Nature is so very naked that the Actæon who has surprised her dressing, blushes. Sunrise on the plains of Mewar is an especially brutal affair.

The moon was burnt out and the air was bitterly cold, when the Englishman headed due east in his tonga, and the patient sowar behind nodded and yawned in the saddle. There was no warning of the day's advent. The horses were unharnessed, at one halting–stage, in the thick, soft shadows of night, and ere their successors had limped under the bar, a raw and cruel light was upon all things, so that the Englishman could see every rent seam in the rocks around. A little further, and he came upon the black bulk of Chitor between him and the morning sun. It has already been said that the Fort resembles a man–of–war. Every distant view heightens this impression, for the swell of the sides follows the form of a ship, and the bastions on the south wall make the sponsons in which the machine–guns are mounted. From bow to stern, the thing more than three miles long, is between three and five hundred feet high, and from one–half to one–quarter of a mile broad. Have patience, now, to listen to a rough history of Chitor.

In the beginning, no one knows clearly who scraped the hillsides of the hill rising out of the bare plain, and made of it a place of strength. It is written that, eleven and a half centuries ago, Bappa Rawul, the demi–god whose stature was twenty cubits, whose loin–cloth was five hundred feet long, and whose spear was beyond the power of mortal man to lift, took Chitor from "Man Singh, the Mori Prince," and wrote the first chapter of the history of Mewar, which he received ready–made from Man Singh who, if the chronicles speak sooth, was his uncle. Many and very marvellous legends cluster round the name of Bappa Rawul; and he is said to have ended his days far away from India, in Khorasan, where he married an unlimited number of the Daughters of Heth, and was the father of all the Nowshera Pathans. Some who have wandered, by the sign–posts of inscription, into the fogs of old time, aver that, two centuries before Bappa Rawul took Chitor the Mori division of the Pramar Rajputs, who are the ruling family of Mewar, had found a hold in Bhilwara, and for four centuries before that time had ruled in Kathiawar; and had royally

sacked and slain, and been sacked and slain in turn. But these things are for the curious and the scholar, and not for the reader who reads lightly. Nine princes succeeded Bappa, between 728 and 1068 A.D., and among these was one Alluji, who built a Jain tower upon the brow of the hill, for in those days, though the Sun was worshipped, men were all Jains.

And here they lived and sallied into the plains, and fought and increased the borders of their kingdom, or were suddenly and stealthily murdered, or stood shoulder to shoulder against the incursions of the "Devil men" from the north. In 1150 A.D. was born Samar Singh, and he married into the family of Prithi Raj, the last Hindu Emperor of Delhi, who was at feud, in regard to a succession question, with the Prince of Kanauj. In the war that followed, Kanauj, being hard pressed by Prithi Raj, and Samar Singh, called Shahabuddin Ghori to his aid. At first, Samar Singh and Prithi Raj broke the army of the Northern somewhere in the lower Punjab, but two years later Shahabuddin came again, and, after three days' fighting on the banks of the Kaggar, slew Samar Singh, captured and murdered Prithi Raj, and sacked Delhi and Amber, while Samar Singh's favourite queen became *sati* at Chitor. But another wife, a princess of Patun, kept her life, and when Shahabuddin sent down Kutbuddin to waste her lands, led the Rajput army, in person, from Chitor, and defeated Kutbuddin.

Then followed confusion, through eleven turbulent reigns that the annalist has failed to unravel. Once in the years between 1193 and the opening of the fourteenth century, Chitor must have been taken by the Mussulman, for it is written that one prince "recovered Chitor and made the name of Rana to be recognised by all." Six princes were slain in battles against the Mussulman, in vain attempts to clear the land from the presence of the infidel.

Then Ala–ud–din Khilji, the Pathan Emperor, swept the country to the Dekkan. In those days, and these things are confusedly set down as having happened at the end of the thirteenth century, a relative of Rana Lakhsman Singh, the then Rana of Chitor, had married a Rajput princess of Ceylon—Pudmini, "And she was fairest of all flesh on earth." Her fame was sung through the land by the poets, and she became, in some sort, the Helen of Chitor. Ala–ud–din heard of her beauty and promptly besieged the Fort. When he found his enterprise too difficult, he prayed that he might be permitted to see Pudmini's face in a mirror, and this wish, so says the tale, was granted. Knowing that the Rajput was a gentleman, he entered Chitor almost unarmed, saw the face in the mirror, and was well treated; the husband of the fair Pudmini accompanying him, in return, to the camp at the foot of the hill. Like Raja Runjeet in the ballad the Rajput he—

"…trusted a Mussulman's word Wah! Wah! Trust a liar to lie. Out of his eyrie they tempted my bird, Fettered his wings that he could not fly."

Pudmini's husband was caught by a trick, and Ala–ud–din demanded Pudmini as the price of his return. The Rajputs here showed that they too could scheme, and sent, in great state, Pudmini's litter to the besiegers' intrenchments. But there was no Pudmini in the litter, and her following of handmaidens was a band of seven hundred armed men. Thus, in the confusion of a camp–fight, Pudmini's husband was rescued, and Ala–ud–din's soldiery followed hard on his heels to the gates of Chitor, where the best and bravest on the rock were killed before Ala–ud–din withdrew, only to return soon after and, with a doubled army, besiege in earnest. His first attack men called the half–sack of Chitor, for, though he failed to win within the walls, he killed the flower of the Rajputs. The second attack ended in the first sack and the awful *sati* of the women on the rock.

When everything was hopeless and the very terrible Goddess, who lives in the bowels of Chitor, had spoken and claimed for death eleven out of the twelve of the Rana's sons, all who were young or fair women betook themselves to a great underground chamber, and the fires were lit and the entrance was walled up and they died. The Rajputs opened the gates and fought till they could fight no more, and Ala–ud–din the victorious entered a wasted and desolated city. He wrecked everything except only the palace of Pudmini and the old Jain tower before mentioned. That was all he could do, for there were few men alive of the defenders of Chitor when the day was won, and the women were ashes underground.

Ajai Singh, the one surviving son of Lakshman Singh, had at his father's insistence, escaped from Chitor to "carry on the line" when better days should come. He brought up Hamir, son of one of his elder brothers, to be a thorn in the side of the invader, and Hamir overthrew Maldeo, chief of Jhalore and vassal of Ala–ud–din, into whose hands Ala–ud–din had, not too generously, given what was left of Chitor. So the Sesodias came to their own again, and the successors of Hamir extended their kingdoms and rebuilt Chitor, as kings know how to rebuild cities in a land where human labour and life are cheaper than bread and water. For two centuries, saith Tod, Mewar flourished exceedingly and was the paramount kingdom of all Rajasthan. Greatest of all the successors of Hamir, was Kumbha Rana who, when the Ghilzai dynasty was rotting away and Viceroys declared themselves kings, met, defeated, took captive, and released without ransom, Mahmoud of Malwa. Kumbha Rana built a Tower of Victory, nine stories high, to commemorate this and the other successes of his reign, and the tower stands to–day a mark for miles

across the plains.

But the well–established kingdom weakened, and the rulers took favourites and disgusted their best supporters—after the immemorial custom of too prosperous rulers. Also they murdered one another. In 1535 A.D. Bahadur Shah, King of Gujarat, seeing the decay, and remembering how one of his predecessors, together with Mahmoud of Malwa, had been humbled by Mewar in years gone by, set out to take his revenge of Time and Mewar then ruled by Rana Bikrmajit, who had made a new capital at Deola. Bikrmajit did not stay to give battle in that place. His chiefs were out of hand, and Chitor was the heart and brain of Mewar; so he marched thither, and the Gods were against him. Bahadur Shah mined one of the Chitor bastions, and wiped out in the explosion the Hara Prince of Boondee, with five hundred followers. Jowahir Bae, Bikrmajit's mother, headed a sally from the walls, and was slain. There were Frank gunners among Bahadur Shah's forces, and they hastened the end. The Rajputs made a second *johur*, a sacrifice greater than the sacrifice of Pudmini; and thirteen thousand were blown up in the magazines, or stabbed or poisoned, before the gates were opened and the defenders rushed down.

Out of the carnage was saved Udai Singh, a babe of the Blood Royal, who grew up to be a coward, and a shame to his line. The story of his preservation is written large in Tod, and Edwin Arnold sings it. Read it, who are interested. But, when Udai Singh came to the throne of Chitor, through blood and misrule, after Bahadur Shah had withdrawn from the wreck of the Fort, Akbar sat on the throne of Delhi, and it was written that few people should withstand the "Guardian of Mankind." Moreover, Udai Singh was the slave of a woman. It was Akbar's destiny to subdue the Rajputs, and to win many of them to his own service; sending a Rajput Prince of Amber to get him far–away Arrakan. Akbar marched against Chitor once, and was repulsed; the woman who ruled Udai Singh heading a charge against the besiegers because of the love she bore to her lover. Something of this sort had happened in Ala–ud–din's time, and, like Ala–ud–din, Akbar returned and sat down, in a huge camp, before Chitor in 1568 A.D. Udai Singh fled what was coming; and because the Goddess of Chitor demands always that a crowned head must fall if the defence of her home is to be successful, Chitor fell as it had fallen before—in a *johur* of thousands, a last rush of the men, and the entry of the conqueror into a reeking, ruined slaughter–pen. Akbar's sack was the most terrible of the three, for he killed everything that had life upon the rock, and wrecked and overturned and spoiled. The wonder, the lasting wonder, is that he did not destroy Kumbha Rana's Tower of Victory, the memorial of the defeat of a Mahometan prince. With the third sack the glory of Chitor departed, and Udai Singh

founded himself a new capital, the city of Udaipur. Though Chitor was recovered in Jehangir's time by Udai Singh's grandson, it was never again made the capital of Mewar. It stood, and rotted where it stood, till enlightened and loyal feudatories, in the present years of grace, made attempts, with the help of Executive Engineers, to sweep it up and keep it in repair. The above is roughly, very roughly indeed, the tale of the sacks of Chitor.

Follows an interlude, for the study even of inaccurate history is indigestible to many. There was an elephant at Chitor, to take birds of passage up the hill, and she—she was fifty–one years old, and her name was Gerowlia—came to the dak–bungalow for the Englishman. Let not the word dak–bungalow deceive any man into believing that there is even moderate comfort at Chitor. Gerowlia waited in the sunshine, and chuckled to herself like a female pauper when she receives snuff. Her *mahout* said that he would go away for a drink of water. So he walked, and walked, and walked, till he disappeared on the stone–strewn plains, and the Englishman was left alone with Gerowlia, aged fifty–one. She had been tied by the chain on her near hind leg to a pillar of the verandah; but the string was coir, and more an emblem of authority than a means of restraint. When she had thoroughly exhausted all the resources of the country within range of her trunk, she ate up the string and began to investigate the verandah. There was more coir string, and she ate it all, while the carpenter, who was repairing the dak–bungalow, cursed her and her ancestry from afar. About this time the Englishman was roused to a knowledge of the business, for Gerowlia, having exhausted the string, tried to come into the verandah. She had, most unwisely, been pampered with biscuits an hour before. The carpenter stood on an outcrop of rock, and said angrily: "See what damage your *hathi* has done, Sahib." "'Tisn't my *hathi*," said the Sahib, plaintively. "You ordered it," quoth he, "and it has been here ever so long, eating up everything." He threw pieces of stone at Gerowlia, and went away. It is a terrible thing to be left alone with an unshackled elephant, even though she be a venerable spinster. Gerowlia moved round the dak–bungalow, blowing her nose in a nervous and undecided manner, and presently found some more string and thatch, which she ate. This was too much. The Englishman went out and spoke to her. She opened her mouth and salaamed; meaning thereby "biscuits." So long as she remained in this position she could do no harm.

Imagine a boundless rock–strewn plain, broken here and there by low hills, dominated by the rock of Chitor, and bisected by a single metre–gauge railway track running into the Infinite, and unrelieved by even a way–inspector's trolly. In the foreground put a brand–new dak–bungalow, furnished with a French bedstead, and nothing else; in the

verandah place an embarrassed Englishman, smiling into the open mouth of an idiotic female elephant. But Gerowlia could not live on smiles alone. Finding that no food was forthcoming, she shut her mouth, and renewed her attempts to get into the verandah, and ate more thatch. To say "Hi!" to an elephant is a misdirected courtesy. It quickens the pace, and if you flick her on the trunk with a wet towel, she curls the trunk out of harm's way. Special education is necessary. A little breechless boy passed, carrying a lump of stone. "Hit her on the feet, Sahib," said he; "hit her on the feet." Gerowlia had by this time nearly scraped off her pad, and there were no signs of the *mahout*. The Englishman went out and found a tent–peg, and returning, in the extremity of his wrath smote her bitterly on the nails of the near forefoot.

Gerowlia held up her foot to be beaten, and made the most absurd noises—squawked in fact, exactly like an old lady who has narrowly escaped being run over. She backed out of the verandah, still squawking, on three feet and in the open held up near and off forefoot alternately to be beaten. It was very pitiful, for one swing of her trunk could have knocked the Englishman flat. He ceased whacking her, but she squawked for some minutes and then fell placidly asleep in the sunshine. When the *mahout* returned, he beat her for breaking her tether exactly as the Englishman had done, but much more severely, and the ridiculous old thing hopped on three legs for fully five minutes. "Come along, Sahib," said the *mahout*. "I will show this mother of bastards who is the driver. Fat daughter of the Devil, sit down. You would eat thatch, would you? How does the iron taste?" And he gave Gerowlia a headache, which affected her temper all through the afternoon. She set off, across the railway line which runs below the rock of Chitor, into broken ground cut up with *nullahs* and covered with low scrub, over which it would have been difficult to have taken a sure–footed horse, so fragmentary and disconnected was its nature.

XI
Proves Conclusively the Existence of the Dark Tower Visited by Childe Rolande, and of "Bogey" Who Frightens Children

The Gamberi River—clear as a trout–stream—runs through the waste round Chitor, and is spanned by an old bridge, very solid and massive, said to have been built before the sack of Ala–ud–din. The bridge is in the middle of the stream—the floods have raced round either end of it—and is reached by a steeply sloping stone causeway. From the bridge to the new town of Chitor, which lies at the foot of the hill, runs a straight and well–kept road, flanked on either side by the scattered remnants of old houses, and, here and there, fallen temples. The road, like the bridge, is no new thing, and is wide enough for twenty horsemen to ride abreast.

New Chitor is a very dirty, and apparently thriving, little town, full of grain–merchants and sellers of arms. The ways are barely wide enough for the elephant of dignity and the little brown babies of impudence. The Englishman went through, always on a slope painfully accentuated by Gerowlia who, with all possible respect to her years, must have been a baggage–animal and no true *Sahib's* mount. Let the local Baedeker speak for a moment: "The ascent to Chitor, which begins from within the southeast angle of the town, is nearly a mile to the upper gate, with a slope of about 1 in 15. There are two zig–zag bends, and on the three portions thus formed, are seven gates, of which one, however, has only the basement left." This is the language of fact, which, very properly, leaves out of all account the Genius of the Place who sits at the gate nearest the new city and is with the sightseer throughout. The first impression of repulsion and awe is given by a fragment of tumbled sculpture close to a red daubed *lingam*, near the Padal Pol or lowest gate. It is a piece of frieze, and the figures of the men are worn nearly smooth by time. What is visible is finely and frankly obscene to an English mind.

The road is protected on the cliff side by a thick stone wall, loopholed for musketry, one aperture to every two feet, between fifteen and twenty feet high. This wall is being repaired throughout its length by the Maharana of Udaipur. On the hillside, among the boulders, loose stones, and *dhak*–scrub, lips stone wreckage that must have come down from the brown bastions above.

As Gerowlia laboured up the stone–shod slope, the Englishman wondered how much life had flowed down this sluice of battles, and

been lost at the Padal Pol—the last and lowest gate—where, in the old days, the besieging armies put their best and bravest battalions. Once at the head of the lower slope, there is a clear run–down of a thousand yards with no chance of turning aside either to the right or left. Even as he wondered, he was brought abreast of two stone chhatris, each carrying a red daubed stone. They were the graves of two very brave men, Jeemal of Bedmore, and Kalla, who fell in Akbar's sack fighting like Rajputs. Read the story of their deaths, and learn what manner of warriors they were. Their graves were all that spoke openly of the hundreds of struggles on the lower slope where the fight was always fiercest.

At last, after half an hour's climb, the main gate, the Ram Pol, was gained, and the Englishman passed into the City of Chitor and—then and there formed a resolution, since broken, not to write one word about it for fear that he should be set down as a babbling and a gushing enthusiast. Objects of archæological interest are duly described in an admirable little book of Chitor which, after one look, the Englishman abandoned. One cannot "do" Chitor with a guide–book. The Chaplain of the English Mission to Jehangir said the best that was to be said, when he described the place three hundred years ago, writing quaintly: "Chitor, an ancient great kingdom, the chief city so called which standeth on a mighty high hill, flat on the top, walled about at the least ten English miles. There appear to this day above a hundred churches ruined and divers fair palaces which are lodged in like manner among their ruins, as many Englishmen by the observation have guessed. Its chief inhabitants to–day are Zum and Ohim, birds and wild beasts, but the stately ruins thereof give a shadow of its beauty while it flourished in its pride." Gerowlia struck into a narrow pathway, forcing herself through garden–trees and disturbing the peacocks. An evil guide–man on the ground waved his hand, and began to speak; but was silenced. The death of Amber was as nothing to the death of Chitor—a body whence the life had been driven by riot and the sword. Men had parcelled the gardens of her palaces and the courtyards of her temples into fields; and cattle grazed among the remnants of the shattered tombs. But over all—over rent and bastion, split temple–wall, pierced roof, and prone pillar—lay the "shadow of its beauty while it flourished in its pride." The Englishman walked into a stately palace of many rooms, where the sunlight streamed in through wall and roof, and up crazy stone stairways, held together, it seemed, by the marauding trees. In one bastion, a wind–sown peepul had wrenched a thick slab clear of the wall, but held it tight pressed in a crook of a branch, as a man holds down a fallen enemy under his elbow, shoulder, and forearm. In another place, a strange, uncanny wind sprung from nowhere, was singing all alone

among the pillars of what may have been a Hall of Audience. The Englishman wandered so far in one palace that he came to an almost black–dark room, high up in a wall, and said proudly to himself: "I must be the first man who has been here;" meaning no harm or insult to any one. But he tripped and fell, and as he put out his hands, he felt that the stairs had been worn hollow and smooth by the thread of innumerable naked feet. Then he was afraid, and came away very quickly, stepping delicately over fallen friezes and bits of sculptured men, so as not to offend the Dead; and was mightily relieved when he recovered his elephant and allowed the guide to take him to Kumbha Rana's Tower of Victory.

This stands, like all things in Chitor, among ruins, but time and the other enemies have been good to it. It is a Jain edifice, nine storeys high, crowned atop—was this designed insult or undesigned repair?—with a purely Mahometan dome, where the pigeons and the bats live. Excepting this blemish, the Tower of Victory is nearly as fair as when it left the hands of the builder whose name has not been handed down to us. It is to be observed here that the first, or more ruined, Tower of Victory, built in Alluji's days, when Chitor was comparatively young, was raised by some pious Jain as proof of conquest over things spiritual. The second tower is more worldly in intent.

Those who care to look, may find elsewhere a definition of its architecture and its more striking peculiarities. It was in kind, but not in degree, like the Jugdesh Temple at Udaipur, and, as it exceeded it in magnificence, so its effect upon the mind was more intense. The confusing intricacy of the figures with which it was wreathed from top to bottom, the recurrence of the one calm face, the God enthroned, holding the Wheel of the Law, and the appalling lavishness of decoration, all worked toward the instilment of fear and aversion.

Surely this must have been one of the objects of the architect. The tower, in the arrangement of its stairways, is like the interior of a Chinese carved ivory puzzle–ball. The idea given is that, even while you are ascending, you are wrapping yourself deeper and deeper in the tangle of a mighty maze. Add to this the half–light, the thronging armies of sculptured figures, the mad profusion of design splashed as impartially upon the undersides of the stone window–slabs as upon the door–beam of the threshold—add, most abhorrent of all, the slippery sliminess of the walls always worn smooth by naked men, and you will understand that the tower is not a soothing place to visit. The Englishman fancied presumptuously that he had, in a way, grasped the builder's idea; and when he came to the top storey and sat among the pigeons his theory was this: To attain power, wrote the builder of old, in sentences of fine stone, it is necessary to pass through all sorts

of close–packed horrors, treacheries, battles, and insults, in darkness and without knowledge whether the road leads upward or into a hopeless *cul–de–sac*. Kumbha Rana must many times have climbed to the top storey, and looked out toward the uplands of Malwa on the one side and his own great Mewar on the other, in the days when all the rock hummed with life and the clatter of hooves upon the stony ways, and Mahmoud of Malwa was safe in hold. How he must have swelled with pride—fine insolent pride of life and rule and power—power not only to break things but to compel such builders as those who piled the tower to his royal will! There was no decoration in the top storey to bewilder or amaze—nothing but well–grooved stone–slabs, and a boundless view fit for kings who traced their ancestry—

"From times when forth from the sunlight, the first of our Kings came down, And had the earth for his footstool, and wore the stars for his crown."

The builder had left no mark behind him—not even a mark on the threshold of the door, or a sign in the head of the topmost step. The Englishman looked in both places, believing that those were the places generally chosen for mark–cutting. So he sat and meditated on the beauties of kingship and the unholiness of Hindu art, and what power a shadowland of lewd monstrosities had upon those who believed in it, and what Lord Dufferin, who is the nearest approach to a king in this India, must have thought when aide–de–camps clanked after him up the narrow steps. But the day was wearing, and he came down—in both senses—and, in his descent, the carven things on every side of the tower, and above and below, once more took hold of and perverted his fancy, so that he arrived at the bottom in a frame of mind eminently fitted for a descent into the Gau–Mukh, which is nothing more terrible than a little spring, falling into a reservoir, in the side of the hill.

He stumbled across more ruins and passed between tombs of dead Ranis, till he came to a flight of steps, built out and cut out from rock, going down as far as he could see into a growth of trees on a terrace below him. The stone of the steps had been worn and polished by the terrible naked feet till it showed its markings clearly as agate; and where the steps ended in a rock–slope, there was a visible glair, a great snail–track, upon the rocks. It was hard to keep safe footing upon the sliminess. The air was thick with the sick smell of stale incense, and grains of rice were scattered upon the steps. But there was no one to be seen. Now this in itself was not specially alarming; but the Genius of the Place must be responsible for making it so. The Englishman slipped and bumped on the rocks, and arrived, more suddenly than he desired, upon the edge of a dull blue tank, sunk between walls of timeless masonry. In a slabbed–in recess, water was

pouring through a shapeless stone gargoyle, into a trough; which trough again dripped into the tank. Almost under the little trickle of water, was the loathsome Emblem of Creation, and there were flowers and rice around it. Water was trickling from a score of places in the cut face of the hill; oozing between the edges of the steps and welling up between the stone slabs of the terrace. Trees sprouted in the sides of the tank and hid its surroundings. It seemed as though the descent had led the Englishman, firstly, two thousand years away from his own century, and secondly, into a trap, and that he would fall off the polished stones into the stinking tank, or that the Gau–Mukh would continue to pour water until the tank rose up and swamped him, or that some of the stone slabs would fall forward and crush him flat.

Then he was conscious of remembering, with peculiar and unnecessary distinctness, that, from the Gau–Mukh, a passage led to the subterranean chambers in which the fair Pudmini and her handmaids had slain themselves. And, that Tod had written and the Station–master at Chitor had said, that some sort of devil, or ghoul, or Something, stood at the entrance of that approach. All of which was a nightmare bred in full day and folly to boot; but it was the fault of the Genius of the Place, who made the Englishman feel that he had done a great wrong in trespassing into the very heart and soul of all Chitor. And, behind him, the Gau–Mukh guggled and choked like a man in his death–throe. The Englishman endured as long as he could—about two minutes. Then it came upon him that he must go quickly out of this place of years and blood—must get back to the afternoon sunshine, and Gerowlia, and the dak–bungalow with the French bedstead. He desired no archæological information, he wished to take no notes, and, above all, he did not care to look behind him, where stood the reminder that he was no better than the beasts that perish. But he had to cross the smooth, worn rocks, and he felt their sliminess through his bootsoles. It was as though he were treading on the soft, oiled skin of a Hindu. As soon as the steps gave refuge, he floundered up them, and so came out of the Gau–Mukh, bedewed with that perspiration which follows alike on honest toil or—childish fear.

"This," said he to himself, "is absurd!" and sat down on the fallen top of a temple to review the situation. But the Gau–Mukh had disappeared. He could see the dip in the ground and the beginning of the steps, but nothing more.

Perhaps it was absurd. It undoubtedly appeared so, later. Yet there was something uncanny about it all. It was not exactly a feeling of danger or pain, but an apprehension of great evil.

In defence, it may be urged that there is moral, just as much as there is mine, choke–damp. If you get into a place laden with the latter you die, and if into the home of the former you … behave

unwisely, as constitution and temperament prompt. If any man doubt this, let him sit for two hours in a hot sun on an elephant, stay half an hour in the Tower of Victory, and then go down into the Gau–Mukh, which, it must never be forgotten, is merely a set of springs "three or four in number, issuing from the cliff face at cow–mouth carvings, now mutilated. The water, evidently percolating from the Hathi Kund above, falls first in an old pillared hall and thence into the masonry reservoir below, eventually, when abundant enough, supplying a little waterfall lower down." That, Gentlemen and Ladies, on the honour of one who has been frightened of the dark in broad daylight, is the Gau–Mukh, as though photographed.

The Englishman regained Gerowlia and demanded to be taken away, but Gerowlia's driver went forward instead and showed him a new Mahal just built by the present Maharana. Carriage drives, however, do not consort well with Chitor and the "shadow of her ancient beauty." The return journey, past temple after temple and palace upon palace, began in the failing light, and Gerowlia was still blundering up and down narrow by–paths—for she possessed all an old woman's delusion as to the slimness of her waist when the twilight fell, and the smoke from the town below began to creep up the brown flanks of Chitor, and the jackals howled. Then the sense of desolation, which had been strong enough in all conscience in the sunshine, began to grow and grow.

Near the Ram Pol there was some semblance of a town with living people in it, and a priest sat in the middle of the road and howled aloud upon his gods, until a little boy came and laughed in his face and he went away grumbling. This touch was deeply refreshing; in the contemplation of it, the Englishman clean forgot that he had overlooked the gathering in of materials for an elaborate statistical, historical, geographical account of Chitor. All that remained to him was a shuddering reminiscence of the Gau–Mukh and two lines of the "Holy Grail,"

> "And up into the sounding halls he passed,
> But nothing in the sounding halls he saw."

Post Scriptum.—There was something very uncanny about the Genius of the Place. He dragged an ease–loving egotist out of the French bedstead with the gilt knobs at head and foot, into a more than usually big folly—nothing less than a seeing of Chitor by moonlight. There was no possibility of getting Gerowlia out of *her* bed, and a mistrust of the Maharana's soldiery who in the day–time guarded the gates, prompted the Englishman to avoid the public way, and scramble straight up the hillside, along an attempt at a path which he

had noted from Gerowlia's back. There was no one to interfere, and nothing but an infinity of pestilent nullahs and loose stones to check. Owls came out and hooted at him, and animals ran about in the dark and made uncouth noises. It was an idiotic journey, and it ended—Oh, horror! in that unspeakable Gau–Mukh—this time entered from the opposite or brushwooded side, as far as could be made out in the dusk and from the chuckle of the water which, by night, was peculiarly malevolent.

Escaping from this place, crab–fashion, the Englishman crawled into Chitor and sat upon a flat tomb till the moon, a very inferior and second–hand one, rose, and turned the city of the dead into a city of scurrying ghouls—in sobriety, jackals. The ruins took strange shapes and shifted in the half light and cast objectionable shadows.

It was easy enough to fill the rock with the people of old times, and a very beautiful account of Chitor restored, made out by the help of Tod, and bristling with the names of the illustrious dead, would undoubtedly have been written, had not a woman, a living breathing woman, stolen out of a temple—what was she doing in that galley?—and screamed in piercing and public–spirited fashion. The Englishman got off the tomb and departed rather more noisily than a jackal; feeling for the moment that he was not much better. Somebody opened a door with a crash, and a man cried out: "Who is there?" But the cause of the disturbance was, for his sins, being most horribly scratched by some thorny scrub over the edge of the hill—there are no bastions worth speaking of near the Gau–Mukh—and the rest was partly rolling, partly scrambling, and mainly bad language.

When you are too lucky sacrifice something, a beloved pipe for choice, to Ganesh. The Englishman has seen Chitor by moonlight—not the best moonlight truly, but the watery glare of a nearly spent moon—and his sacrifice to Luck is this. He will never try to describe what he has seen—but will keep it as a love–letter, a thing for one pair of eyes only—a memory that few men to–day can be sharers in. And does he, through this fiction, evade insulting, by pen and ink, a scene as lovely, wild, and unmatchable as any that mortal eyes have been privileged to rest upon?

An intelligent and discriminating public are perfectly at liberty to form their own opinions.

XII
Contains the History of the Bhumia of Jhaswara, and the Record of a Visit to the House of Strange Stories. Demonstrates the Felicity of Loaferdom, Which is the Veritable Companionship of the Indian Empire, and Proposes a Scheme for the Better Officering of Two Departments

Come away from the monstrous gloom of Chitor and escape northwards. The place is unclean and terrifying. Let us catch To–day by both hands and return to the Station–master who is also booking–parcels and telegraph–clerk, and who never seems to go to bed—and to the comfortably wadded bunks of the Rajputana–Malwa line.

While the train is running, be pleased to listen to the perfectly true story of the *bhumia* of Jhaswara, which is a story the sequel whereof has yet to be written. Once upon a time, a Rajput landholder; a *bhumia*, and a Mahometan *jaghirdar*, were next–door neighbours in Ajmir territory. They hated each other thoroughly for many reasons, all connected with land; and the *jaghirdar* was the bigger man of the two. In those days, it was the law that the victims of robbery or dacoity should be reimbursed by the owner of the lands on which the affair had taken place. The ordinance is now swept away as impracticable. There was a highway robbery on the *bhumia's* holding; and he vowed that it had been "put up" by the Mahometan who, he said, was an Ahab. The reive–gelt payable nearly ruined the Rajput, and he, labouring under a galling grievance or a groundless suspicion, fired the *jaghirdar's* crops, was detected and brought up before the English Judge who gave him four years' imprisonment. To the sentence was appended a recommendation that, on release, the Rajput should be put on heavy securities for good behaviour. "Otherwise," wrote the Judge, who seems to have known the people he was dealing with, "he will certainly kill the *jaghirdar*." Four years passed, and the *jaghirdar* obtained wealth and consideration, and was made, let us say, a Khan Bahadur, and an Honorary Magistrate; but the *bhumia* remained in gaol and thought over the highway robbery. When the day of release came, a new Judge hunted up his predecessor's finding and recommendation, and would have put the *bhumia* on security. "Sahib," said the *bhumia*, "I have no people. I have been in gaol. What am I now? And who will find security for me? If you will send me

back to gaol again I can do nothing, and I have no friends." So they released him, and he went away into an outlying village and borrowed a sword from one house, and had it sharpened in another, for love. Two days later fell the birthday of the Khan Bahadur and the Honorary Magistrate, and his friends and servants and dependants made a little levee and did him honour after the native custom. The *bhumia* also attended the levee, but no one knew him, and he was stopped at the door of the courtyard by the servant. "Say that the *bhumia* of Jhaswara has come to pay his salaams," said he. They let him in, and in the heart of Ajmir City, in broad daylight, and before all the *jaghirdar's* household, he smote off his enemy's head so that it rolled upon the ground. Then he fled, and though they raised the countryside against him he was never caught, and went into Bikanir.

Five years later, word came to Ajmir that Chimbo Singh, the *bhumia* of Jhaswara, had taken service under the Thakur Sahib of Palitana. The case was an old one, and the chances of identification misty, but the suspected was caught and brought in, and one of the leading native barristers of the Bombay Bar was retained to defend him. He said nothing and continued to say nothing, and the case fell through. He is believed to be "wanted" now for a fresh murder committed within the last few months, out Bikanir way.

And now that the train has reached Ajmir, the Crewe of Rajputana, whither shall a tramp turn his feet? The Englishman set his stick on end, and it fell with its point Northwest as nearly as might be. This being translated, meant Jodhpur, which is the city of the Houyhnhnms. If you would enjoy Jodhpur thoroughly, quit at Ajmir the decent conventionalities of "station" life, and make it your business to move among gentlemen—gentlemen in the Ordnance or the Commissariat, or, better still, gentlemen on the Railway. At Ajmir, gentlemen will tell you what manner of place Jodhpur is, and their accounts, though flavoured with oaths, are amusing. In their eyes the desert that rings the city has no charms, and they discuss affairs of the State, as they understand them, in a manner that would curl the hair on a Political's august head. Jodhpur has been, but things are rather better now, a much–favoured camping ground for the light–cavalry of the Road—the loafers with a certain amount of brain and great assurance. The explanation is simple. There are more than four hundred horses in His Highness's city stables alone; and where the Houyhnhnm is, there also will be the Yahoo. This is sad but true.

Besides the Uhlans who come and go on Heaven knows what mysterious errands, there are bag–men travelling for the big English firms. Jodhpur is a good customer, and purchases all sorts of things, more or less useful, for the State or its friends. These are the gentlemen to know, if you would understand something of matters

which are not written in reports.

The Englishman took a train from Ajmir to Marwar Junction, which is on the road to Mount Abu, westward from Ajmir, and at five in the morning, under pale moonlight, was uncarted at the beginning of the Jodhpur State Railway—one of the quaintest little lines that ever ran a locomotive. It is the Maharaja's very own, and pays about ten per cent; but its quaintness does not lie in these things. It is worked with rude economy, and started life by singularly and completely falsifying the Government estimates for its construction. An intelligent bureau asserted that it could not be laid down for less than—but the error shall be glossed over. It was laid down for a little more than seventeen thousand rupees a mile, with the help of second–hand rails and sleepers; and it is currently asserted that the Station–masters are flagmen, pointsmen, ticket–collectors, and everything else, except platforms, and lamp–rooms. As only two trains are run in the twenty–four hours, this economy of staff does not matter. The State line, with the comparatively new branch to the Pachpadra salt–pits, pays handsomely and is exactly suited to the needs of its users. True, there is a certain haziness as to the hour of starting, but this allows laggards more time, and fills the packed carriages to overflowing.

From Marwar Junction to Jodhpur, the train leaves the Aravalis and goes northwards into the region of death that lies beyond the Luni River. Sand, *ak* bushes, and sand–hills, varied with occasional patches of unthrifty cultivation, make up the scenery. Rain has been very scarce in Marwar this year, and the country, consequently, shows at its worst, for almost every square mile of a kingdom nearly as large as Scotland is dependent on the sky for its crops. In a good season, a large village can pay from seven to nine thousand rupees revenue without blenching. In a bad one, "all the king's horses and all the king's men" may think themselves lucky if they raise fifteen rupees from the same place. The fluctuation is startling.

From a countryside, which to the uninitiated seems about as valuable as a stretch of West African beach, the State gets a revenue of nearly forty lakhs; and men who know the country vow that it has not been one tithe exploited, and that there is more to be made from salt marble and—curious thing in this wilderness—good forest conservancy, than an open–handed Durbar dreams of. An amiable weakness for unthinkingly giving away villages where ready cash failed, has somewhat hampered the revenue in past years; but now—and for this the Maharaja deserves great credit—Jodhpur has a large and genuine surplus and a very compact little scheme of railway extension. Before turning to a consideration of the City of Jodhpur, hear a true story in connection with the Hyderabad–Pachpadra project which those interested in the scheme may lay to heart.

His State line, his "ownest own," as has been said, very much delighted the Maharaja who, in one or two points, is not unlike Sir Theodore Hope of sainted memory. Pleased with the toy, he said effusively, in words which may or may not have reached the ears of the Hyderabad–Pachpadra people: "This is a good business. If the Government will give me independent jurisdiction, I'll make and open the line straight away from Pachpadra to the end of my dominions, *i.e.*, all but to Hyderabad."

Then "up and spake an elder knight, sat at the King's right knee," who knew something about the railway map of India and the Controlling Power of strategical lines: "Maharaja Sahib—here is the Indus Valley State line and here is the Bombay–Baroda line. Where would *you* be?" "By Jove," quoth the Maharaja, though he swore by quite another god: "I see!" and thus he abandoned the idea of a Hyderabad line, and turned his attention to an extension to Nagore, with a branch to the Makrana marble quarries which are close to the Sambhar salt lake near Jeypore. And, in the fulness of time, that extension will be made and perhaps extended to Bahawalpur.

The Englishman came to Jodhpur at midday, in a hot, fierce sunshine that struck back from the sands and the ledges of red rock, as though it were May instead of December. The line scorned such a thing as a regular ordained terminus. The single track gradually melted away into the sands. Close to the station was a grim stone dak–bungalow, and in the verandah stood a brisk, bag–and–flask–begirdled individual, cracking his joints with excess of irritation.

Nota Bene.—When one is on the Road it is above all things necessary to "pass the time o' day" to fellow–wanderers. Failure to comply with this law implies that the offender is "too good for his company"; and this, on the Road, is the unpardonable sin. The Englishman "passed the time o' day" in due and ample form. "Ha! Ha!" said the gentleman with the bag. "Isn't this a sweet place? There ain't no *ticca–gharies*, and there ain't nothing to eat, if you haven't brought your vittles, an' they charge you three–eight for a bottle of whisky. Oh! it's a sweet place." Here he skipped about the verandah and puffed. Then turning upon the Englishman, he said fiercely: "What have you come here for?" Now this was rude, because the ordinary form of salutation on the Road is usually "And what are you for?" meaning "what house do you represent?" The Englishman answered dolefully that he was travelling for pleasure, which simple explanation offended the little man with the courier–bag. He snapped his joints more excruciatingly than ever: "For pleasure? My God! For pleasure? Come here an' wait five weeks for your money, an', mark what I'm tellin' you now, you don't get it then! But per'aps your ideas of pleasure is different from most people's. For pleasure! Yah!" He

skipped across the sands toward the station, for he was going back with the down train, and vanished in a whirlwind of luggage and the fluttering of female skirts: in Jodhpur the women are baggage coolies. A level, drawling voice spoke from an inner room: "'E's a bit upset. That's what 'e is! I remember when I was at Gworlior"—the rest of the story was lost, and the Englishman set to work to discover the nakedness of the dak–bungalow. For reasons which do not concern the public, it is made as bitterly uncomfortable as possible. The food is infamous, and the charges seem to be wilfully pitched about eighty per cent above the tariff, so that some portion of the bill, at least, may be paid without bloodshed, or the unseemly defilement of walls with the contents of drinking glasses. This is short–sighted policy, and it would, perhaps, be better to lower the prices and hide the tariff, and put a guard about the house to prevent jackal–molested donkeys from stampeding into the verandahs. But these be details. Jodhpur dak–bungalow is a merry, merry place, and any writer in search of new ground to locate a madly improbable story in, could not do better than study it diligently. In front lies sand, riddled with innumerable ant–holes, and beyond the sand the red sandstone wall of the city, and the Mahometan burying–ground that fringes it. Fragments of sandstone set on end mark the resting places of the Faithful, who are of no great account here. Above everything, a mark for miles around, towers the dun–red pile of the Fort which is also a Palace. This is set upon sandstone rock whose sharper features have been worn smooth by the wash of the windblown sand. It is as monstrous as anything in Dore's illustrations of the *Contes Drolatiques* and, wherever it wanders, the eye comes back at last to its fantastic bulk. There is no greenery on the rock, nothing but fierce sunlight or black shadow. A line of red hills forms the background of the city, and this is as bare as the picked bones of camels that lie bleaching on the sand below.

Wherever the eye falls, it sees a camel or a string of camels—lean, racer–built *sowarri* camels, or heavy, black, shag–haired trading ships bent on their way to the Railway Station. Through the night the air is alive with the bubbling and howling of the brutes, who assuredly must suffer from nightmare. In the morning the chorus round the station is deafening.

Knowing what these camels meant, but trusting nevertheless that the road would not be *very* bad, the Englishman went into the city, left a well–kunkered road, turned through a sand–worn, red sandstone gate, and sank ankle–deep in fine reddish white sand. This was the main thoroughfare of the city. Two tame lynxes shared it with a donkey; and the rest of the population seemed to have gone to bed. In the hot weather, between ten in the morning and four in the afternoon all Jodhpur stays at home for fear of death by sun–stroke, and it is

possible that the habit extends far into what is officially called the "cold weather"; or, perhaps, being brought up among sands, men do not care to tramp them for pleasure. The city internally is a walled and secret place; each courtyard being hidden from view by a red sandstone wall except in a few streets where the shops are poor and mean.

In an old house now used for the storing of tents, Akbar's mother lay two months, before the "Guardian of Mankind" was born, drawing breath for her flight to Umarkot across the desert. Seeing this place, the Englishman thought of many things not worth the putting down on paper, and went on till the sand grew deeper and deeper, and a great camel, heavily laden with stone, came round a corner and nearly stepped on him. As the evening fell, the city woke up, and the goats and the camels and the kine came in by hundreds, and men said that wild pig, which are strictly preserved by the Princes for their own sport, were in the habit of wandering about the roads. Now if they do this in the capital, what damage must they not do to the crops in the district? Men said that they did a very great deal of damage, and it was hard to keep their noses out of anything they took a fancy to. On the evening of the Englishman's visit, the Maharaja went out, as is his laudable custom, alone and unattended, to a road actually *in* the city along which one specially big pig was in the habit of passing. His Highness got his game with a single shot behind the shoulder, and in a few days it was pickled and sent off to the Maharana of Udaipur, as a love–gift. There is great friendship between Jodhpur and Udaipur, and the idea of one King going abroad to shoot game for another has something very pretty and quaint in it.

Night fell and the Englishman became aware that the conservancy of Jodhpur might be vastly improved. Strong stenches, say the doctors, are of no importance; but there came upon every breath of heated air—and in Jodhpur City the air is warm in mid–winter—the faint, sweet, sickly reek that one has always been taught to consider specially deadly. A few months ago there was an impressive outbreak of cholera in Jodhpur, and the Residency Doctor, who really hoped that the people would be brought to see sense, did his best to bring forward a general cleansing–scheme. But the city fathers would have none of it. Their fathers had been trying to poison themselves in well–defined ways for an indefinite number of years; and they were not going to have any of the Sahib's "sweeper–nonsense."

To clinch everything, one travelled member of the community rose in his place and said: "Why, I've been to Simla. Yes, to Simla! And even *I* don't want it!"

When the black dusk had shut down, the Englishman climbed up a little hill and saw the stars come out and shine over the desert. Very

far away, some camel–drivers had lighted a fire and were singing as they sat by the side of their beasts. Sound travels as far over sand as over water, and their voices came into the city wall and beat against it in multiplied echoes.

Then he returned to the House of Strange Stories—the Dak–bungalow—and passed the time o' day with a light–hearted bagman—a Cockney, in whose heart there was no thought of India, though he had travelled for years throughout the length and breadth of the Empire and over New Burma as well. There was a fort in Jodhpur, but you see that was not in his line of business exactly, and there were stables, but "you may take my word for it, them who has much to do with horses is a bad lot. You get hold of the Maharaja's coachman and he'll drive you all round the shop. I'm only waiting here collecting money." Jodhpur dak–bungalow seems to be full of men "waiting here." They lie in long chairs in the verandah and tell each other interminable stories, or stare citywards and express their opinion of some dilatory debtor. They are all waiting for something; and they vary the monotony of a life they make wilfully dull beyond words, by waging war with the dak–bungalow khansama. Then they return to their long chairs or their couches, and sleep. Some of them, in old days, used to wait as long as six weeks—six weeks in May, when the sixty miles from Marwar Junction to Jodhpur was covered in three days by slow–pacing bullock carts! Some of them are bagmen, able to describe the demerits of every dak–bungalow from the Peshin to Pagan, and southward to Hyderabad—men of substance who have "The Trades" at their back. It is a terrible thing to be in "The Trades," that great Doomsday Book of Calcutta, in whose pages are written the names of doubtful clients. Let light–hearted purchasers take note.

And the others, who wait and swear and spit and exchange anecdotes—what are they? Bummers, land–sharks, skirmishers for their bread. It would be cruel in a fellow–tramp to call them loafers. Their lien upon the State may have its origin in horses, or anything else; for the State buys anything vendible, from Abdul Rahman's most promising importations to a patent, self–acting corkscrew. They are a mixed crew, but amusing and full of strange stories of adventure by land and sea. And their ends are as curiously brutal as their lives. A wanderer was once swept into the great, still back–water that divides the loaferdom of Upper India—that is to say, Calcutta and Bombay—from the north–going current of Madras, where Nym and Pistol are highly finished articles with certificates of education. This back–water is a dangerous place to break down in, as the men on the Road know well. "You can run Rajputana in a pair o' sack breeches an' an old hat, but go to Central Injia with money," says the wisdom of the Road. So the waif died in the bazaar, and the Barrack–master Sahib gave orders

for his burial. It might have been the bazaar sergeant, or it might have been an hireling who was charged with the disposal of the body. At any rate, it was an Irishman who said to the Barrack–master Sahib: "Fwhat about that loafer?" "Well, what's the matter?" "I'm considtherin whether I'm to mash in his thick head, or to break his long legs. He won't fit the store–coffin anyways."

Here the story ends. It may be an old one; but it struck the Englishman as being rather unsympathetic in its nature; and he has preserved it for this reason. Were the Englishman a mere Secretary of State instead of an enviable and unshackled vagabond, he would remodel that Philanthropic Institution of Teaching Young Subalterns how to Spell—variously called the Intelligence and the Political Department—and giving each boy the pair of sack breeches and old hat, above prescribed, would send him out for a twelvemonth on the Road. Not that he might learn to swear Australian oaths (which are superior to any ones in the market) or to drink bazaar–drinks (which are very bad indeed), but in order that he might gain an insight into the tertiary politics of States—things less imposing than succession–cases and less wearisome than boundary disputes, but very well worth knowing.

A small volume might be written of the ways and the tales of Indian loafers of the more brilliant order—such Chevaliers of the Order of Industry as would throw their glasses in your face did you call them loafers. They are a genial, blasphemous, blustering crew, and preëminent even in a land of liars.

XIII
A King's House and Country. Further Consideration of the Hat-marked Caste

The hospitality that spreads tables in the wilderness, and shifts the stranger from the back of the hired camel into a two–horse victoria, must be experienced to be appreciated.

To those unacquainted with the peculiarities of the native–trained horse, this advice may be worth something. Sit as far back as ever you can, and, if Oriental courtesy have put an English bit and bridoon in a mouth by education intended for a spiked curb, leave the whole contraption alone. Once acquainted with the comparative smoothness of English iron–mongery, your mount will grow frivolous. In which event a four–pound steeplechase saddle, accepted through sheer shame, offers the very smallest amount of purchase to untrained legs.

The Englishman rode up to the Fort, and by the way learnt all these things and many more. He was provided with a racking, female horse who swept the gullies of the city by dancing sideways.

The road to the Fort, which stands on the Hill of Strife, wound in and out of sixty–foot hills, with a skilful avoidance of all shade; and this was at high noon, when puffs of heated air blew from the rocks on all sides. "What must the heat be in May?" The Englishman's companion was a cheery Brahmin, who wore the lightest of turbans and sat the smallest of neat little country–breds. "Awful!" said the Brahmin. "But not so bad as in the district. Look there!" and he pointed from the brow of a bad eminence, across the quivering heat–haze, to where the white sand faded into bleach blue sky and the horizon was shaken and tremulous. "It's very bad in summer. Would knock you—oh yes—all to smash, but *we* are accustomed to it." A rock–strewn hill, about half a mile, as the crow flies, from the Fort was pointed out as the place whence, at the beginning of this century, the Pretender Sowae besieged Raja Maun for five months, but could make no headway against his foe. One gun of the enemy's batteries specially galled the Fort, and the Jodhpur King offered a village to any of his gunners who should dismount it. "It was smashed," said the Brahmin. "Oh yes, all to pieces." Practically, the city which lies below the Fort is indefensible, and during the many wars of Marwar has generally been taken up by the assailants without resistance.

Entering the Fort by the Jeypore Gate, and studiously refraining from opening his umbrella, the Englishman found shadow and coolth, took off his hat to the tun–bellied, trunk–nosed God of Good–Luck who had been very kind to him in his wanderings, and sat down near

half a dozen of the Maharaja's guns bearing the mark, "A. Broome, Cossipore, 1857," or "G. Hutchinson, Cossipore, 1838." Now rock and masonry are so curiously blended in this great pile that he who walks through it loses sense of being among buildings. It is as though he walked through mountain–gorges. The stone–paved, inclined planes, and the tunnel–like passages driven under a hundred feet height of buildings, increase this impression. In many places the wall and rock runs up unbroken by any window for forty feet.

It would be a week's work to pick out even roughly the names of the dead who have added to the buildings, or to describe the bewildering multiplicity of courts and ranges of rooms; and, in the end, the result would be as satisfactory as an attempt to describe a nightmare. It is said that the rock on which the Fort stands is four miles in circuit, but no man yet has dared to estimate the size of the city that they call the Palace, or the mileage of its ways. Ever since Ras Joda, four hundred years ago, listened to the voice of a *Jogi*, and leaving Mundore built his eyrie on the "Bird's nest" as the Hill of Strife was called, the Palaces have grown and thickened. Even to–day the builders are still at work. Takht Singh, the present ruler's predecessor, built royally. An incomplete bastion and a Hall of Flowers are among the works of his pleasure. Hidden away behind a mighty wing of carved red sandstone lie rooms set apart for Viceroys, Durbar Halls and dinner–rooms without end. A gentle gloom covers the evidences of the catholic taste of the State in articles of "bigotry and virtue"; but there is enough light to show the *raison d'être* of the men who wait in the dak–bungalow. And, after all, what is the use of Royalty in these days if a man may not take delight in the pride of the eye? Kumbha Rana, the great man of Chitor, fought like a Rajput, but he had an instinct which made him build the Tower of Victory at, who knows what cost of money and life. The fighting–instinct thrown back upon itself must have some sort of outlet; and a merciful Providence wisely ordains that the Kings of the East in the nineteenth century shall take pleasure in shopping on an imperial scale. Dresden China snuff–boxes, mechanical engines, electro–plated fish–slicers, musical boxes, and gilt blown–glass Christmas–tree balls do not go well with the splendours of a Palace that might have been built by Titans and coloured by the morning sun. But there are excuses to be made for Kings who have no fighting to do.

In one of the higher bastions stands a curious specimen of one of the earliest *mitrailleuses*—a cumbrous machine carrying twenty gun–barrels in two rows, which small–arm fire is flanked by two tiny cannon. As a muzzle–loading implement its value after the first discharge would be insignificant; but the soldiers lounging by assured the Englishman that it had done good service in its time.

A man may spend a long hour in the upper tiers of the Palaces, but still far from the roof–tops, in looking out across the desert. There are Englishmen in these wastes, who say gravely that there is nothing so fascinating as the sand of Bikanir and Marwar. "You see," explained an enthusiast of the Hat–marked Caste, "you are not shut in by roads, and you can go just as you please. And, somehow, it grows upon you as you get used to it, and you end, y'know, by falling in love with the place." Look steadily from the Palace westward where the city with its tanks and serais is spread at your feet, and you will, in a lame way, begin to understand the fascination of the Desert which, by those who have felt it, is said to be even stronger than the fascination of the Road. The city is of red sandstone and dull and sombre to look at. Beyond it, where the white sand lies, the country is dotted with camels limping into the Eiwigkeit or coming from the same place. Trees appear to be strictly confined to the suburbs of the city. Very good. If you look long enough across the sands, while a voice in your ear is telling you of half–buried cities, old as old Time, and wholly unvisited by Sahibs, of districts where the white man is unknown, and of the wonders of far–away Jeysulmir ruled by a half–distraught king, sand–locked and now smitten by a terrible food and water famine, you will, if it happen that you are of a sedentary and civilised nature, experience a new emotion—will be conscious of a great desire to take one of the lobbing camels and get away into the desert, away from the last touch of To–day, to meet the Past face to face. Some day a novelist will exploit the unknown land from the Rann, where the wild ass breeds, northward and eastward, till he comes to the Indus.

But the officials of Marwar do not call their country a desert. On the contrary, they administer it very scientifically and raise, as has been said, about thirty–eight lakhs from it. To come back from the influence and the possible use of the desert to more prosaic facts. Read quickly a rough record of things in modern Marwar. The old is drawn in Tod, who speaks the truth. The Maharaja's right hand in the work of the State is Maharaj Sir Pertab Singh, Prime Minister A.—D.—C. to the Prince of Wales, capable of managing the Marwari who intrigues like a—Marwari, equally capable, as has been seen, of moving in London Society, and Colonel of a newly raised crack cavalry corps. The Englishman would have liked to have seen him, but he was away in the desert somewhere, either marking a boundary or looking after a succession case. Not very long ago, as the Setts of Ajmir knew well, there was a State debt of fifty lakhs. This has now been changed into a surplus of three lakhs, and the revenue is growing. Also, the simple Dacoit who used to enjoy himself very pleasantly, has been put into a department, and the Thug with him.

Consequently, for the department takes a genuine interest in this

form of *shikar*, and the gaol leg–irons are not too light, dacoities have been reduced to such an extent that men say "you may send a woman, with her ornaments upon her, from Sojat to Phalodi, and she will not lose a nose–ring." Again, and this in a Rajput State is an important matter, the boundaries of nearly every village in Marwar have been demarcated, and boundary fights, in which both sides preferred small–arm fire to the regulation club, are unknown. The open–handed system of giving away villages had raised a large and unmannerly crop of *jaghirdars*. These have been taken up and brought in hand by Sir Pertab Singh, to the better order of the State.

A Punjabi Sirdar, Har Dyal Singh, has reformed, or made rather, Courts on the Civil and Criminal Side; and his hand is said to be found in a good many sweepings out of old corners. It must always be borne in mind that everything that has been done, was carried through over and under unlimited intrigue, for Jodhpur is a Native State. Intrigue must be met with intrigue by all except Gordons or demi–gods; and it is curious to hear how a reduction in tariff, or a smoothing out of some tangled Court, had to be worked by shift and byway. The tales are comic, but not for publication. Howbeit, Har Dyal Singh got his training in part under the Punjab Government, and in part in a little Native State far away in the Himalayas, where intrigue is not altogether unknown. To the credit of the "Pauper Province" be it said, it is not easy to circumvent a Punjabi. The details of his work would be dry reading. The result of it is good, and there is justice in Marwar, and order and firmness in its administration.

Naturally, the land–revenue is the most interesting thing in Marwar from an administrative point of view. The basis of it is a tank about the size of a swimming–bath, with a catchment of several hundred square yards, draining through leeped channels. When God sends the rain, the people of the village drink from the tank. When the rains fail, as they failed this year, they take to their wells, which are brackish and breed guinea–worm. For these reasons the revenue, like the Republic of San Domingo, is never alike for two years running. There are no canal questions to harry the authorities; but the fluctuations are enormous. Under the Aravalis the soil is good: further north they grow millet and pasture cattle, though, said a Revenue Officer cheerfully, "God knows what the brutes find to eat." *Apropos* of irrigation, the one canal deserves special mention, as showing how George Stephenson came to Jodhpur and astonished the inhabitants. Six miles from the city proper lies the Balsaman Sagar, a great tank. In the hot weather, when the city tanks ran out or stank, it was the pleasant duty of the women to tramp twelve miles at the end of the day's work to fill their lotahs. In the hot weather Jodhpur is—let a simile suffice. Sukkur in June would be Simla to Jodhpur.

The State Engineer, who is also the Jodhpur State Line, for he has no European subordinates, conceived the idea of bringing the water from the Balsaman into the city. Was the city grateful? Not in the least. It is said that the Sahib wanted the water to run uphill and was throwing money into the tank. Being true Marwaris, men betted on the subject. The canal—a built out one, for water must not touch earth in these parts—was made at a cost of something over a lakh, and the water came down because its source was a trifle higher than the city. Now, in the hot weather, the women need not go for long walks, but the Marwari cannot understand how it was that the waters came down to Jodhpur. From the Marwari to money matters is an easy step. Formerly, that is to say, up to within a very short time, the Treasury of Jodhpur was conducted in a shiftless, happy–go–lucky sort of fashion, not uncommon in Native States, whereby the Mahajuns "held the bag" and made unholy profits on discount and other things, to the confusion of the Durbar Funds and their own enrichment. There is now a Treasury modelled on English lines, and English in the important particular that money is not to be got from it for the asking, and the items of expenditure are strictly looked after.

In the middle of all this bustle of reform planned, achieved, frustrated, and replanned, and the never–ending underground warfare that surges in a Native State, move the English officers—the irreducible minimum of exiles. As a caste, the working Englishmen in Native States are curiously interesting; and the traveller whose tact by this time has been blunted by tramping, sits in judgment upon them as he has seen them. In the first place, they are, they must be, the fittest who have survived; for though, here and there, you shall find one chafing bitterly against the burden of his life in the wilderness, one to be pitied more than any chained beast, the bulk of the caste are honestly and unaffectedly fond of their work, fond of the country around them, and fond of the people they deal with. In each State their answer to a question is the same. The men with whom they are in contact are "all right" when you know them, but you've got to "know them first," as the music–hall song says. Their hands are full of work; so full that, when the incult wanderer said: "What do you find to do?" they look upon him with contempt and amazement, exactly as the wanderer himself had once looked upon a Globe–trotter, who had put to him the same impertinent query. And—but here the Englishman may be wrong—it seemed to him that in one respect their lives were a good deal more restful and concentrated than those of their brethren under the British Government. There was no talk of shiftings and transfers and promotions, stretching across a Province and a half, and no man said anything about Simla. To one who has hitherto believed that Simla is the hub of the Empire, it is

disconcerting to hear: "Oh, Simla! That's where you Bengalis go. We haven't anything to do with Simla down here." And no more they have. Their talk and their interests run in the boundaries of the States they serve, and, most striking of all, the gossipy element seems to be cut altogether. It is a backwater of the river of Anglo–Indian life—or is it the main current, the broad stream that supplies the motive power, and is the other life only the noisy ripple on the surface? You who have lived, not merely looked at, both lives, decide. Much can be learnt from the talk of the caste, many curious, many amusing, and some startling things. One hears stories of men who take a poor, impoverished State as a man takes a wife, "for better or worse," and, moved by some incomprehensible ideal of virtue, consecrate—that is not too big a word—consecrate their lives to that State in all single–heartedness and purity. Such men are few, but they exist to–day, and their names are great in lands where no Englishman travels. Again the listener hears tales of grizzled diplomats of Rajputana—Machiavellis who have hoisted a powerful intriguer with his own intrigue, and bested priestly cunning, and the guile of the Oswal, simply that the way might be clear for some scheme which should put money into a tottering Treasury, or lighten the taxation of a few hundred thousand men—or both; for this can be done. One tithe of that force spent on their own personal advancement would have carried such men very far.

Truly the Hat–marked Caste are a strange people. They are so few and so lonely and so strong. They can sit down in one place for years, and see the works of their hands and the promptings of their brain grow to actual and beneficent life, bringing good to thousands. Less fettered than the direct servant of the Indian Government, and working over a much vaster charge, they seem a bigger and a more large–minded breed. And that is saying a good deal.

But let the others, the little people bound down and supervised, and strictly limited and income–taxed, always remember that the Hat–marked are very badly off for shops. If they want a neck–tie they must get it up from Bombay, and in the Rains they can hardly move about; and they have no amusements and must go a day's railway journey for a rubber, and their drinking–water is doubtful: and there is less than one white woman *per* ten thousand square miles.

After all, comparative civilisation has its advantages.

XIV
Among the Houyhnhnms

Jodhpur differs from the other States of Rajputana in that its Royalty are peculiarly accessible to an inquiring public. There are wanderers, the desire of whose life it is "to see Nabobs," which is the Globe–trotter's title for any one in unusually clean clothes, or an Oudh Taluqdar in gala dress. Men asked in Jodhpur whether the Englishman would like to see His Highness. The Englishman had a great desire to do so, if His Highness would be in no way inconvenienced. Then they scoffed: "Oh, he won't *durbar* you, you needn't flatter yourself. If he's in the humour he'll receive you like an English country–gentleman." How in the world could the owner of such a place as Jodhpur Palace be in any way like an English country–gentleman? The Englishman had not long to wait in doubt. His Highness intimated his readiness to see the Englishman between eight and nine in the morning at the Raika–Bagh. The Raika–Bagh is not a Palace, for the lower storey and all the detached buildings round it are filled with horses. Nor can it in any way be called a stable, because the upper storey contains sumptuous apartments full of all manner of valuables both of the East and the West. Nor is it in any sense a pleasure–garden, for it stands on soft white sand, close to a multitude of litter and sand training tracks, and is devoid of trees for the most part. Therefore the Raika–Bagh is simply the Raika–Bagh and nothing else. It is now the chosen residence of the Maharaja who loves to live among his four hundred or more horses. All Jodhpur is horse–mad by the way, and it behoves any one who wishes to be any one to keep his own race–course. The Englishman went to the Raika–Bagh, which stands half a mile or so from the city, and passing through a long room filled with saddles by the dozen, bridles by the score, and bits by the hundred, was aware of a very small and lively little cherub on the roof of a garden–house. He was carefully muffled, for the morning was chill. "Good morning," he cried cheerfully in English, waving a mittened hand. "Are you going to see my faver and the horses?" It was the Maharaja Kanwar, the Crown Prince, the apple of the Maharaja's eye, and one of the quaintest little bodies that ever set an Englishman disrespectfully laughing. He studies English daily with one of the English officials of the State, and stands a very good chance of being thoroughly spoiled, for he is a general pet. As befits his dignity, he has his own carriage or carriages, his own twelve–hand stable, his own house and retinue.

A few steps further on, in a little enclosure in front of a small two–storied white bungalow, sat His Highness the Maharaja, deep in

discussion with the State Engineer. He wore an English ulster, and within ten paces of him was the first of a long range of stalls. There was an informality of procedure about Jodhpur which, after the strained etiquette of other States, was very refreshing. The State Engineer, who has a growing line to attend to, cantered away and His Highness after a few introductory words, knowing what the Englishman would be after, said: "Come along, and look at the horses." Other formality there was absolutely none. Even the indispensable knot of hangers–on stood at a distance, and behind a paling, in this most rustic country residence. A well–bred fox–terrier took command of the proceedings, after the manner of dogs the world over, and the Maharaja led to the horse–boxes. But a man turned up, bending under the weight of much bacon. "Oh! here's the pig I shot for Udaipur last night. You see that is the best piece. It's pickled, and that's what makes it yellow to look at." He patted the great side that was held up. "There will be a camel sowar to meet it half way to Udaipur; and I hope Udaipur will be pleased with it. It was a very big pig." "And where did you shoot it, Maharaja Sahib?" "Here," said His Highness, smiting himself high up under the armpit. "Where else would you have it?" Certainly this descendant of Raja Maun was more like an English country–gentleman than the Englishman in his ignorance had deemed possible. He led on from horse–box to horse–box, the terrier at his heels, pointing out each horse of note; and Jodhpur has many. "There's *Raja*, twice winner of the Civil Service Cup." The Englishman looked reverently and *Raja* rewarded his curiosity with a vicious snap, for he was being dressed over, and his temper was out of joint. Close to him stood *Autocrat*, the grey with the nutmeg marks on the off–shoulder, a picture of a horse, also disturbed in his mind. Next to him was a chestnut Arab, a hopeless cripple, for one of his knees had been smashed and the leg was doubled up under him. It was *Turquoise*, who, six or eight years ago, rewarded good feeding by getting away from his groom, falling down and ruining himself, but who, none the less, has lived an honoured pensioner on the Maharaja's bounty ever since. No horses are shot in the Jodhpur stables, and when one dies—they have lost not more than twenty–five in six years—his funeral is an event. He is wrapped in a white sheet which is strewn with flowers, and, amid the weeping of the *saises*, is borne away to the burial ground.

After doing the honours for nearly half an hour the Maharaja departed, and as the Englishman has not seen more than forty horses, he felt justified in demanding more. And he got them. *Eclipse* and *Young Revenge* were out down–country, but *Sherwood* at the stud, *Shere Ali*, *Conqueror*, *Tynedale*, *Sherwood II*, a maiden of Abdul Rahman's, and many others of note, were in, and were brought out. Among the

veterans, a wrathful, rampant, red horse still, came *Brian Boru*, whose name has been written large in the chronicles of the Indian turf, jerking his *sais* across the road. His near–fore is altogether gone, but as a pensioner he condescends to go in harness, and is then said to be a "handful." He certainly looks it.

At the two hundred and fifty–seventh horse, and perhaps the twentieth block of stables, the Englishman's brain began to reel, and he demanded rest and information on a certain point. He had gone into some fifty stalls, and looked into all the rest, and in the looking had searchingly sniffed. But, as truly as he was then standing far below *Brian Boru's* bony withers, never the ghost of a stench had polluted the keen morning air. The City of the Houyhnhnms was specklessly clean—cleaner than any stable, racing or private, that he had been into. How was it done? The pure white sand accounted for a good deal, and the rest was explained by one of the Masters of Horse: "Each horse has one *sais* at least—old *Ringwood* has four—and we make 'em work. If we didn't, we'd be mucked up to the horses' bellies in no time. Everything is cleaned off at once; and whenever the sand's tainted it's renewed. There's quite enough sand you see hereabouts. Of course we can't keep their coats so good as in other stables, by reason of the rolling; but we can keep 'em pretty clean."

To the eye of one who knew less than nothing about horse–flesh, this immaculate purity was very striking, and quite as impressive was the condition of the horses, which was English—quite English. Naturally, none of them were in any sort of training beyond daily exercise, but they were fit and in such thoroughly good fettle. Many of them were out on the various tracks, and many were coming in. Roughly, two hundred go out of a morning, and, it is to be feared, learn from the heavy going of the Jodhpur courses how to hang in their stride. This is a matter for those who know, but it struck the Englishman that a good deal of the unsatisfactory performances of the Jodhpur stables might be accounted for by their having lost their clean stride on the sand, and having to pick it up gradually on the less holding down–country courses—unfortunately when they were *not* doing training gallops, but the real thing.

It was pleasant to sit down and watch the rush of the horses through the great opening—gates are not affected—going on to the countryside where they take the air. Here a boisterous, unschooled Arab shot out across the road and cried, "Ha! Ha!" in the scriptural manner, before trying to rid himself of the grinning black imp on his back. Behind him a Cabuli—surely all Cabulis must have been born with Pelhams in their mouths—bored sulkily across the road, or threw himself across the path of a tall, mild–eyed Kurnal–bred youngster, whose cocked ears and swinging head showed that, though he was so

sedate, he was thoroughly taking in his surroundings, and would very much like to know if there were anybody better than himself on the course that morning. Impetuous as a schoolboy and irresponsible as a monkey, one of the Prince's polo ponies, not above racing in his own set, would answer the question by rioting past the pupil of Parrott, the monogram on his bodycloth flapping free in the wind, and his head and hogged tail in the elements. The youngster would swing himself round, and polka–mazurka for a few paces, till his attention would be caught by some dainty Child of the Desert, fresh from the Bombay stables, sweating at every sound, backing and filling like a rudderless ship. Then, thanking his stars that he was wiser than some people, Number 177 would lob on to the track and settle down to his spin like the gentleman he was. Elsewhere, the eye fell upon a cloud of nameless ones, purchases from Abdul Rahman, whose worth will be proved next hot weather, when they are seriously taken in hand—skirmishing over the face of the land and enjoying themselves immensely. High above everything else, like a collier among barges, screaming shrilly, a black, flamboyant Marwari stallion, with a crest like the crest of a barb, barrel–bellied, goose–rumped, and river–maned, pranced through the press, while the slow–pacing waler carriage–horses eyed him with deep disfavour, and the Maharaja Kanwar's tiny mount capered under his pink, Roman nose, kicking up as much dust as the *Foxhall* colt who had got on to a lovely patch of sand and was dancing a saraband in it. In and out of the tangle, going down to or coming back from the courses, ran, shuffled, rocketed, plunged, sulked, or stampeded countless horses of all kinds, shapes, and descriptions—so that the eye at last failed to see what they were, and only retained a general impression of a whirl of bays, greys, iron greys, and chestnuts with white stockings, some as good as could be desired, others average, but not one distinctly bad.

"We have no downright bad 'uns in this stable. What's the use?" said the Master of Horse, calmly. "They are all good beasts and, one with another, must cost more than a thousand rupees each. This year's new ones bought from Bombay and the pick of our own studs are a hundred strong about. May be more. Yes, they look all right enough; but you can never know what they are going to turn out. Live–stock is very uncertain." "And how are the stables managed? how do you make room for the fresh stock?" Something this way. Here are all the new ones and Parrott's lot, and the English colts that Maharaja Pertab Singh brought out with him from Home. *Winterlake* out o' *Queen's Consort* that chestnut is with the two white stockings you're looking at now. Well, next hot weather we shall see what they're made of and which is who. There's so many that the trainer hardly knows 'em one from another till they begin to be a good deal forward. Those that

haven't got the pace, or that the Maharaja don't fancy, they're taken out and sold for what they'll bring. The man who takes the horses out has a good job of it. He comes back and says: "I sold such and such for so much, and here's the money." That's all. Well, our rejections are worth having. They have taken prizes at the Poona Horse Show. See for yourself. Is there one of those that you wouldn't be glad to take for a hack, and look well after too? Only they're no use to us, and so out they go by the score. We've got sixty riding–boys, perhaps more, and they've got their work cut out to keep them all going. What you've seen are only the stables. We've got one stud at Bellara, eighty miles out, and they come in sometimes in droves of three and four hundred from the stud. They raise Marwaris there too, but that's entirely under native management. We've got nothing to do with that. The natives reckon a Marwari the best country–bred you can lay hands on; and some of them are beauties! Crests on 'em like the top of a wave. Well, there's that stud and another stud and, reckoning one with another, I should say the Maharaja has nearer twelve hundred than a thousand horses of his own. For this place here, two wagon–loads of grass come in every day from Marwar Junction. Lord knows how many saddles and bridles we've got. I never counted. I suppose we've about forty carriages, not counting the ones that get shabby and are stacked in places in the city, as I suppose you've seen. We take 'em out in the morning, a regular string altogether, brakes and all; but the prettiest turn–out we ever turned out was Lady Dufferin's pony four–in–hand. Walers—thirteen–two the wheelers, I think, and thirteen–one the leaders. They took prizes in Poona. That *was* a pretty turn–out. The prettiest in India. Lady Dufferin, she drove it when the Viceroy was down here last year. There are bicycles and tricycles in the carriage department too. I don't know how many, but when the Viceroy's camp was held, there was about one apiece for the gentlemen, with remounts. They're somewhere about the place now, if you want to see them. How do we manage to keep the horses so quiet? You'll find some o' the youngsters play the goat a good deal when they come out o' stable, but, as you say, there's no vice generally. It's this way. We don't allow any curry–combs. If we did, the *saises* would be wearing out their brushes on the combs. It's all elbow–grease here. They've got to go over the horses with their hands. They must handle 'em, and a native he's afraid of a horse. Now an English groom, when a horse is doing the fool, clips him over the head with a curry–comb, or punches him in the belly; and that hurts the horse's feelings. A native, he just stands back till the trouble is over. He *must* handle the horse or he'd get into trouble for not dressing him, so it comes to all handling and no licking, and that's why you won't get hold of a really vicious brute in these stables. Old *Ringwood* he had four *saises*, and he wanted 'em

every one, but the other horses have no more than one *sais* apiece. The Maharaja he keeps fourteen or fifteen horses for his own riding. Not that he cares to ride now, but he likes to have his horses; and no one else can touch 'em. Then there's the horses that he mounts his visitors on, when they come for pig–sticking and such like, and then there's a lot of horses that go to Maharaja Pertab Singh's new cavalry regiment. So you see a horse can go through all three degrees sometimes before he gets sold, and be a good horse at the end of it. And I think that's about all!"

A cloud of youngsters, sweating freely and ready for any mischief, shot past on their way to breakfast, and the conversation ended in a cloud of sand and the drumming of hurrying hooves.

In the Raika–Bagh are more racing cups than this memory holds the names of. Chiefest of all was the Delhi Assemblage Cup—the Imperial Vase, of solid gold, won by *Crown Prince*. The other pieces of plate were not so imposing. But of all the Crown Jewels, the most valuable appeared at the end of the inspection. It was the small Maharaja Kanwar lolling in state in a huge barouche—his toes were at least two feet off the floor—that was taking him from his morning drive. "Have you seen *my* horses?" said the Maharaja Kanwar. The four twelve–hand ponies had been duly looked over, and the future ruler of Jodhpur departed satisfied.

XV
Treats of the Startling Effect of a Reduction in Wages and the Pleasures of Loaferdom. Paints the State of the Boondi Road and the Treachery of Ganesh of Situr

"A twenty–five per cent reduction all roun' an' no certain leave when you wants it. *Of* course the best men goes somewhere else. That's only natural, and 'ere's this sanguinary down mail a–stickin' in the eye of the Khundwa down! I tell you, Sir, Injia's a bad place—a very bad place. 'Tisn't what it was when I came out one and thirty year ago, an' the drivers was getting their seven and eight 'undred rupees a month an' was treated as *men*."

The Englishman was on his way to Nasirabad, and a gentleman in the Railway was explaining to him the real reason of the decadence of the Empire. It was because, the Rajputana–Malwa Railway had cut all its employés twenty–five per cent. It is ungenerous to judge a caste by a few samples; but the Englishman had on the Road and elsewhere seen a good deal of gentlemen on the Railway, and they spend their pay in a manner that would do credit to an income of a thousand a month. Now they say that the twenty–five per cent reduction deprives them of all the pleasures of life. So much the better if it makes them moderately economical in their expenditure. Revolving these things in his mind, together with one or two stories of extravagances not quite fit for publication, the Englishman came to Nasirabad, before sunrise, and there to an evil–looking tonga. Quoth Ram Baksh, proprietor, driver, *sais*, and everything else, calmly: "At this time of the year and having regard to the heat of the sun who wants a top to a tonga? I have no top. I have a top, but it would take till twelve o'clock to put it on. And behold Sahib, Padre Martum Sahib went in this tonga to Deoli. All the officer Sahibs of Deoli and Nasirabad go in this tonga for *shikar*. This is a 'shutin–tonga'!" "When Church and Army are brought against one, argument is in vain." But to take a soft, office–bred unfortunate into the wilderness, upon a skeleton, a diagram of a conveyance, is brutality. Ram Baksh did not see it, and headed his two thirteen–hand rats straight towards the morning sun, along a beautiful military road. "We shall get to Deoli in six hours," said Ram Baksh the boastful, and, even as he spoke, the spring of the tonga bar snapt "mit a harp–like melodious twang." "What does it matter?" said Ram Baksh. "Has the Sahib never seen a tonga–iron break before? Padre Martum Sahib and all the Officer Sahibs in Deoli—" "Ram Baksh," said the

Englishman, sternly, "I am not a Padre Sahib nor an Officer Sahib, and if you say anything more about Padre Martum Sahib or the officer in Deoli I shall grow very angry, Ram Baksh."

"Humph," said Ram Baksh, "I knew you were not a Padre Sahib." The little mishap was patched up with string, and the tonga went on merrily. It is Stevenson who says that the "invitation to the road," nature's great morning song, has not yet been properly understood or put to music. The first note of it is the sound of the dawn–wind through long grass. It is good, good beyond expression, to see the sun rise upon a strange land and to know that you have only to go forward and possess that land—that it will dower you before the day is ended with a hundred new impressions and, perhaps, one idea. It is good to snuff the wind when it comes in over large uplands or down from the tops of the blue Aravalis—dry and keen as a new–ground sword. Best of all is to light the First Pipe—is there any tobacco so good as that we burn in honour of the breaking day?—and, while the ponies wake the long white road with their hooves and the birds go abroad in companions together, to thank your stars that you are neither the Subaltern who has Orderly Room, the 'Stunt who has office, or the Judge who has the Court to attend; but are only a loafer in a flannel shirt bound, if God pleases, to "little Boondi," somewhere beyond the faint hills beyond the plain.

But there was alloy in this delight. Men had told the Englishman darkly that Boondi State had no love for Englishmen, that there was nowhere to stop, and that no one would do anything for money. Love was out of the question. Further, it was an acknowledged fact that there were no Englishmen of any kind in Boondi. But the Englishman trusted that Ganesh would be good to him, and that he would, somehow or other, fall upon his feet as he had fallen before. The road from Nasirabad to Deoli, being military in its nature, is nearly as straight as a ruler and about as smooth. Here and there little rocky hills, the last off–shoots of the Aravalis to the west, break the ground; but the bulk of it is fair and without pimples. The Deoli Force are apparently so utterly Irregular that they can do without a telegraph, have their mails carried by runners, and dispense with bridges over all the fifty–six miles that separate them from Nasirabad. However, a man who goes shikarring for any length of time in one of Ram Baksh's tongas would soon learn to dispense with anything and everything. "*All* the Sahibs use my tonga; I've got eight of them and twenty pairs of horses," said Ram Baksh. "They go as far as Gangra, where the tigers are, for they are 'shutin–tongas.'" Now the Englishman knew Gangra slightly, having seen it on the way to Udaipur; and it was as perverse and rocky a place as any man would desire to see. He politely expressed doubt. "I tell you my tongas go anywhere," said Ram Baksh,

testily. A hay–wagon—they cut and stack their hay in these parts—blocked the road. Ram Baksh ran the tonga to one side, into a rut, fetched up on a tree–stump, rebounded on to a rock, and struck the road again. "Observe," said Ram Baksh; "but that is nothing. You wait till we get on the Boondi Road, and I'll make you shake, shake like a bottle." "Is it *very* bad?" "I've never been to Boondi myself, but I hear it is all rocks—great rocks as big as this tonga." But though he boasted himself and his horses nearly all the way, he could not reach Deoli in anything like the time he had set forth. "If I am not at Boondi by four," he had said, at six in the morning, "let me go without my fee." But by midday he was still far from Deoli, and Boondi lay twenty–eight miles beyond that station. "What can I do?" said he. "I've laid out lots of horses—any amount. But the fact is I've never been to Boondi. I shan't go there in the night." Ram Baksh's "lots of horses" were three pair between Nasirabad and Deoli—three pair of undersized ponies who did wonders. At one place, after he had quitted a cotton wagon, a drove of gipsies, and a man on horseback, with his carbine across his saddle–bow, the Englishman came to a stretch of road so utterly desolate that he said: "Now I am clear of everybody who ever knew me. This is the beginning of the waste into which the scape–goat was sent."

From a bush by the roadside sprang up a fat man who cried aloud in English: "How does Your Honour do? I met Your Honour in Simla this year. Are you quite well? Ya–as, I am here. Your Honour remembers me? I am travelling. Ya–as. Ha! Ha!" and he went on, leaving His Honour bemazed. It was a Babu—a Simla Babu, of that there could be no doubt; but who he was or what he was doing, thirty miles from anywhere, His Honour could not make out. The native moves about more than most folk, except railway people, imagine. The big banking firms of Upper India naturally keep in close touch with their great change–houses in Ajmir, despatching and receiving messengers regularly. So it comes to pass that the necessitous circumstances of Lieutenant McRannamack, of the Tyneside Tailtwisters, quartered on the Frontier, are thoroughly known and discussed, a thousand miles south of the cantonment where the light–hearted Lieutenant goes to his money–lender.

This is by the way. Let us return to the banks of the Banas River, where "poor Carey," as Tod calls him, came when he was sickening for his last illness. The Banas is one of those streams which runs "over golden sands with feet of silver," but, from the scarp of its banks, Deoli in the rains must be isolated. Ram Baksh, questioned hereon, vowed that all the Officer Sahibs never dreamed of halting, but went over in boats or on elephants. According to Ram Baksh the men of Deoli must be wonderful creatures. They do nothing but use his tongas. A break

in some low hills gives on to the dead flat plain in which Deoli stands. "You must stop here for the night," said Ram Baksh. "I will *not* take my horses forward in the dark; God knows where the dak–bungalow is. I've forgotten, but any one of the Officer Sahibs in Deoli will tell you."

Those in search of a new emotion would do well to run about an apparently empty cantonment, in a disgraceful shooting–tonga, hunting for a place to sleep in. Chaprassis come out of back verandahs, and are rude, and regimental Babus hop off godowns, and are flippant, while in the distance a Sahib looks out of his room, and eyes the dusty forlorn–hope with silent contempt. It should be mentioned that the dust on the Deoli Road not only powders but masks the face and raiment of the passenger.

Next morning Ram Baksh was awake with the dawn, and clamorous to go on to Boondi. "I've sent a pair of horses, big horses, out there and the *sais* is a fool. Perhaps they will be lost; I want to find them." He dragged his unhappy passenger on the road once more and demanded of all who passed the dak–bungalow which was the way to Boondi. "Observe," said he, "there can be only one road, and if I hit it we are all right, and I'll show you what the tonga can do." "Amen," said the Englishman, devoutly, as the tonga jumped into and out of a larger hole. "Without doubt this is the Boondi Road," said Ram Baksh; "it is so bad."

It has been before said that the Boondi State has no great love for Sahibs. The state of the road proves it. "This," said Ram Baksh, tapping the wheel to see whether the last plunge had smashed a spoke, "is a very good road. You wait till you see what is ahead." And the funeral staggered on—over irrigation cuts, through buffalo wallows, and dried pools stamped with the hundred feet of kine (this, by the way, is the most cruel road of all), up rough banks where the rock ledges peered out of the dust, down steep–cut dips ornamented with large stones, and along two–feet deep ruts of the rains, where the tonga went slantwise even to the verge of upsetting. It was a royal road—a native road—a Raj road of the roughest, and, through all its jolts and bangs and bumps and dips and heaves, the eye of Ram Baksh rolled in its blood–shot socket, seeking for the "big horses" he had so rashly sent into the wilderness. The ponies that had done the last twenty miles into Deoli were nearly used up, and did their best to lie down in the dry beds of nullahs.

A man came by on horseback, his servant walking before with platter and meal–bag. "Have you seen any horses hereabouts?" cried Ram Baksh. "Horses? What the Devil have I to do with your horses? D'you think I've stolen them?" Now this was decidedly a strange answer, and showed the rudeness of the land. An old woman under a tree cried out in a strange tongue and ran away. It was a dream–like

experience, this hunting for horses in a wilderness with neither house nor hut nor shed in sight. "If we keep to the road long enough we must find them. Look at the road. This Raj ought to be smitten with bullets." Ram Baksh had been pitched forward nearly on the off–pony's rump, and was in a very bad temper indeed. The funeral found a house—a house walled with thorns—and near by were two big horses, thirteen–two if an inch, and harnessed quite regardless of expense.

Everything was repacked and rebound with triple ropes, and the Sahib was provided with an extra cushion; but he had reached a sort of dreamsome Nirvana, having several times bitten his tongue through, cut his boot against the wheel–edge, and twisted his legs into a true–lovers'–knot. There was no further sense of suffering in him. He was even beginning to enjoy himself faintly and by gasps. The road struck boldly into hills with all their teeth on edge, that is to say, their strata breaking across the road in little ripples. The effect of this was amazing. The tonga skipped merrily as a young fawn, from ridge to ridge. It shivered, it palpitated, it shook, it slid, it hopped, it waltzed, it ricochetted, it bounded like a kangaroo, it blundered like a sledge, it swayed like a top–heavy coach on a down–grade, it "kicked" like a badly coupled railway carriage, it squelched like a country–cart, it squeaked in its torment, and lastly, it essayed to plough up the ground with its nose. After three hours of this performance, it struck a tiny little ford, set between steeply sloping banks of white dust, where the water was clear brown and full of fish. And here a blissful halt was called under the shadow of the high bank of a tobacco field.

Would you taste one of the real pleasures of Life? Go through severe acrobatic exercises in and about a tonga for four hours; then, having eaten and drank till you can no more, sprawl in the cool of a nullah bed with your head among the green tobacco, and your mind adrift with the one little cloud in a royally blue sky. Earth has nothing more to offer her children than this deep delight of animal well–being. There were butterflies in the tobacco—six different kinds, and a little rat came out and drank at the ford. To him succeeded the flight into Egypt. The white banks of the ford framed the picture perfectly—the Mother in blue, on a great white donkey, holding the Child in her arms, and Joseph walking beside, his hand upon the donkey's withers. By all the laws of the East, Joseph should have been riding and the Mother walking. This was an exception decreed for the Englishman's special benefit. It was very warm and very pleasant, and, somehow, the passers by the ford grew indistinct, and the nullah became a big English garden, with a cuckoo singing far down in the orchard, among the apple–blossoms. The cuckoo started the dream. He was the only real thing in it, for on waking the garden slipped back into the water, but the cuckoo remained and called and called for all the world as

though he had been a veritable English cuckoo. "Cuckoo—cuckoo—cuck;" then a pause and renewal of the cry from another quarter of the horizon. After that the ford became distasteful, so the procession was driven forward and in time plunged into what must have been a big city once, but the only inhabitants were oil–men. There were abundance of tombs here, and one carried a life–like carving in high relief of a man on horseback spearing a foot–soldier. Hard by this place the road or rut turned by great gardens, very cool and pleasant, full of tombs and black–faced monkeys who quarrelled among the tombs, and shut in from the sun by gigantic banians and mango trees. Under the trees and behind the walls, priests sat singing; and the Englishman would have inquired into what strange place he had fallen, but the men did not understand him.

Ganesh is a mean little God of circumscribed powers. He was dreaming, with a red and flushed face, under a banian tree; and the Englishman gave him four annas to arrange matters comfortably at Boondi. His priest took the four annas, but Ganesh did nothing whatever, as shall be shown later. His only excuse is that his trunk was a good deal worn, and he would have been better for some more silver leaf, but that was no fault of the Englishman.

Beyond the dead city was a jhil, full of snipe and duck, winding in and out of the hills; and beyond the jhil, hidden altogether among the hills, was Boondi. The nearer to the city the viler grew the road and the more overwhelming the curiosity of the inhabitants. But what befel at Boondi must be reserved for another chapter.

XVI
The Comedy of Errors and the Exploitation of Boondi. the Castaway of the Dispensary and the Children of the Schools. a Consideration of the Shields of Rajasthan and Other Trifles

It is high time that a new treaty were made with Maha Rao Raja Ram Singh, Bahadur, Raja of Boondi. He keeps the third article of the old one too faithfully, which says that he "shall not enter into negotiations with any one without the consent of the British Government." He does not negotiate at all. Arrived at Boondi Gate, the Englishman asked where he might lay his head for the night, and the Quarter Guard with one accord said: "The Sukh Mahal, which is beyond the city," and the tonga went thither through the length of the town till it arrived at a pavilion on a lake—a place of two turrets connected by an open colonnade. The "house" was open to the winds of heaven and the pigeons of the Raj; but the latter had polluted more than the first could purify. A snowy–bearded *chowkidar* crawled out of a place of tombs, which he seemed to share with some monkeys, and threw himself into Anglo–Saxon attitudes. He was a great deal worse than Ram Baksh, for he said that all the Officer Sahibs of Deoli came to the Sukh Mahal for *shikar* and—never went away again, so pleased were they. The Sahib had brought the Honour of his Presence, and he was a very old man, and without a written permit could do nothing. Then he fell deeply asleep without warning; and there was a pause, of one hour only, which the Englishman spent in seeing the lake. It, like the jhils on the road, wound in and out among the hills, and, on the bund side, was bounded by a hill of black rock crowned with a *chhatri* of grey stone. Below the bund was a garden as fair as eye could wish, and the shores of the lake were dotted with little temples. Given a habitable house,—a mere dak–bungalow,—it would be a delightful spot to rest in. Warned by some bitter experiences in the past, the Englishman knew that he was in for the demi–semi–royal or embarrassing reception, when a man, being the unwelcome guest of a paternal State, is neither allowed to pay his way and make himself comfortable, nor is he willingly entertained. When he saw a one–eyed *munshi* (clerk), he felt certain that Ganesh had turned upon him at last. The *munshi* demanded and received the *purwana*, or written permit. Then he sat down and questioned the traveller exhaustively as to his character and profession. Having thoroughly satisfied himself that the visitor was in no way connected with the Government or the

"Agenty Sahib Bahadur," he took no further thought of the matter and the day began to draw in upon a grassy bund, an open–work pavilion, and a disconsolate tonga.

At last the faithful servitor, who had helped to fight the Battle of the Mail Bags at Udaipur, broke his silence, and vowing that all these devil–people—not more than twelve—had only come to see the fun, suggested the breaking of the *munshi's* head. And, indeed, that seemed the best way of breaking the ice; for the *munshi* had, in the politest possible language, put forward the suggestion that there was nothing particular to show that the Sahib who held the *purwana* had really any right to hold it. The *chowkidar* woke up and chanted a weird chant, accompanied by the Anglo–Saxon attitudes, a new set. He was an old man, and all the Sahib–log said so, and within the pavilion were tables and chairs and lamps and bath–tubs, and everything that the heart of man could desire. Even now an enormous staff of menials were arranging all these things for the comfort of the Sahib Bahadur and Protector of the Poor, who had brought the honour and glory of his Presence all the way from Deoli. What did tables and chairs and eggs and fowls and very bright lamps matter to the Raj? He was an old man and … "Who put the present Raja on the throne?" "Lake Sahib," promptly answered the *chowkidar*. "I was there. That is the news of many old years." Now Tod says it was he himself who installed "Lalji the beloved" in the year 1821. The Englishman began to lose faith in the *chowkidar*. The *munshi* said nothing but followed the Englishman with his one workable eye. A merry little breeze crisped the waters of the lake, and the fish began to frolic before going to bed.

"Is nobody going to do or bring anything?" said the Englishman, faintly, wondering whether the local gaol would give him a bed if he killed the *munshi*. "I am an old man," said the *chowkidar*, "and because of their great respect and reverence for the Sahib in whose Presence I am only a bearer of orders and a servant awaiting them, men, many men, are bringing now tent–flies which I with my own hands will wrap, here and there, there and here, in and about the pillars of the place; and thus you, O Sahib, who have brought the honour of your Presence to the Boondi Raj over the road to Deoli, which is a *kutcha* road, will be provided with a very fine and large apartment over which I will watch while you go to kill the tigers in these hills."

By this time two youths had twisted *canvas* round some of the pillars of the colonnade, making a sort of loose–box with a two–foot air–way all round the top. There was no door, but there were unlimited windows. Into this enclosure the *chowkidar* heaped furniture on which many generations of pigeons had evidently been carried off by cholera, until he was entreated to desist. "What," said he,

scornfully, "are tables and chairs to this Raj? If six be not enough, let the Presence give an order, and twelve shall be forthcoming. Everything shall be forthcoming." Here he filled a native lamp with kerosene oil and set it in a box upon a stick. Luckily, the oil which he poured so lavishly from a quart bottle was bad, or he would have been altogether consumed.

Night had fallen long before this magnificence was ended. The superfluous furniture—chairs for the most part—was shovelled out into the darkness, and by the light of a flamboyant lamplet—a merry wind forbade candles—the Englishman went to bed, and was lulled to sleep by the rush of the water escaping from the overflow trap and the splash of the water–turtle as he missed the evasive fish. It was a curious sight. Cats and dogs rioted about the enclosure, and a wind from the lake bellied the canvas. The brushwood of the hills around snapped and cracked as beasts went through it, and creatures—not jackals—made dolorous noises. On the lake it seemed that hundreds of water–birds were keeping a hotel, and that there were arrivals and departures throughout the night. The Raj insisted upon providing a guard of two sepoys, very pleasant men, on four rupees a month. These said that tigers sometimes wandered about on the hills above the lake, but were most generally to be found five miles away. And the Englishman promptly dreamed that a one–eyed tiger came into his tent without a *purwana*. But it was only a wild cat after all; and it fled before the shoes of civilisation.

The Sukh Mahal was completely separated from the city, and might have been a country–house. It should be mentioned that Boondi is jammed into a V–shaped gorge—the valley at the main entrance being something less than five hundred yards across. As it splays out, the thickly packed houses follow its lines, and, seen from above, seem like cattle herded together preparatory to a stampede through the gate. Owing to the set of the hills, very little of the city is visible except from the Palace. It was in search of this latter that the Englishman went abroad and became so interested in the streets that he forgot all about it for a time. Jeypore is a show–city and is decently drained; Udaipur is blessed with a State Engineer and a printed form of Government; for Jodhpur the dry sand, the burning sun, and an energetic doctor have done a good deal, but Boondi has none of these things. The crampedness of the locality aggravates the evil, and it can only be in the rains which channel and furrow the rocky hillsides that Boondi is at all swept out. The Nal Sagar, a lovely little stretch of water, takes up the head of the valley called Banda Gorge, and must, in the nature of things, receive a good deal of unholy drainage. But setting aside this weakness, it is a fascinating place—this jumbled city of straight streets and cool gardens, where gigantic mangoes and

peepuls intertwine over gurgling watercourses, and the cuckoo comes at midday. It boasts no foolish Municipality to decree when a house is dangerous and uninhabitable. The newer shops are built into, on to, over, and under time–blackened ruins of an older day, and the little children skip about tottering arcades and grass–grown walls, while their parents chatter below in the crowded bazaar. In the black slums, the same stones seem to be used over and over again for house–building. Wheeled conveyances are scarce in Boondi city—there is scant room for carts, and the streets are paved with knobsome stones, unpleasant to walk over. From time to time an inroad of *Bunjaras'* pack–bullocks sweeps the main streets clear of life, or one of the Raja's elephants—he has twelve of them—blocks the way. But, for the most part, the foot–passengers have all the city for their own.

They do not hurry themselves. They sit in the sun and think, or put on all the arms in the family, and, hung with ironmongery, parade before their admiring friends. Others, lean, dark men, with bound jaws and only a tulwar for weapon, dive in and out of the dark alleys, on errands of State. It is a beautifully lazy city, doing everything in the real, true, original native way, and it is kept in very good order by the Durbar. There either is or is not an order for everything. There is no order to sell fishing–hooks, or to supply an Englishman with milk, or to change for him currency notes. He must only deal with the Durbar for whatever he requires; and wherever he goes he must be accompanied by at least two armed men. They will tell him nothing, for they know or affect to know nothing of the city. They will do nothing except shout at the little innocents who joyfully run after the stranger and demand *pice*, but there they are, and there they will stay till he leaves the city, accompanying him to the gate, and waiting there a little to see that he is fairly off and away. Englishmen are not encouraged in Boondi. The intending traveller would do well to take a full suit of Political uniform with the sunflowers, and the little black sword to sit down upon. The local god is the "Agenty Sahib," and he is an incarnation without a name—at least among the lower classes. The educated, when speaking of him, always use the courtly "Bahadur" affix; and yet it is a mean thing to gird at a State which, after all, is not bound to do anything for intrusive Englishmen without any visible means of livelihood. The King of this fair city should declare the blockade absolute, and refuse to be troubled with any one except "Colon–nel Baltah, Agenty Sahib Bahadur" and the Politicals. If ever a railway is run through Kotah, as men on the Bombay side declare it must be, the cloistered glory of Boondi will depart, for Kotah is only twenty miles easterly of the city and the road is moderately good. In that day the Globe–trotter will pry about the place, and the Charitable Dispensary—a gem among dispensaries—will be public property.

The Englishman was hunting for the statue of a horse, a great horse hight Hunja, who was a steed of Irak, and a King's gift to Rao Omeda, one time monarch of Boondi. He found it in the city square as Tod had said; and it was an unlovely statue, carven after the dropsical fashion of later Hindu art. No one seemed to know anything about it. A little further on, one cried from a byway in rusty English: "Come and see my Dispensary." There are only two men in Boondi who speak English. One is the head, and the other the assistant, teacher of the English side of Boondi Free School. The third was, some twenty years ago, a pupil of the Lahore Medical College when that institution was young; and he only remembered a word here and there. He was head of the Charitable Dispensary; and insisted upon, then and there, organising a small levee and pulling out all his books. Escape was hopeless: nothing less than a formal inspection and introduction to all the native physicians would serve. There were sixteen beds in and about the courtyard, and between twenty and thirty out–patients stood in attendance. Making allowances for untouched Orientalism, the Dispensary is a good one, and must relieve a certain amount of human misery. There is no other in all Boondi. The operation–book, kept in English, showed the principal complaints of the country. They were: "Asthama," "Numonia," "Skindiseas," "Dabalaty" and "Loin–bite." This last item occurred again and again—three and four cases per week—and it was not until the Doctor said "*Sher se mara*" that the Englishman read it aright. It was "lion–bite," or tiger, if you insist upon zoological accuracy. There was one incorrigible idiot, a handsome young man, naked as the day, who sat in the sunshine, shivering and pressing his hands to his head. "I have given him blisters and setons—have tried native and English treatment for two years, but it is no use. He is always as you see him, and now he stays here by the favour of the Durbar, which is a very good and pitiful Durbar," said the Doctor. There were many such pensioners of the Durbar—men afflicted with chronic "asthama" who stayed "by favour," and were kindly treated. They were resting in the sunshine their hands on their knees, sure that their daily dole of grain and tobacco and opium would be forthcoming. "All folk, even little children, eat opium here," said the Doctor, and the diet–book proved it. After laborious–investigation of everything, down to the last indent to Bombay for Europe medicines, the Englishman was suffered to depart. "Sir, I thank … ," began the Native Doctor, but the rest of the sentence stuck. Sixteen years in Boondi does not increase knowledge of English; and he went back to his patients, gravely conning over the name of the Principal of the Lahore Medical School—a College now—who had taught him all he knew, and to whom he intended to write. There was something pathetic in the man's catching at news from the outside

world of men he had known as Assistant and House Surgeons who are now Rai Bahadurs, and his parade of the few shreds of English that still clung to him. May he treat "loin–bites" and "catrack" successfully for many years. In the happy, indolent fashion that must have merits which we cannot understand, he is doing a good work, and the Durbar allows his Dispensary as much as it wants.

Close to the Dispensary stood the Free School, and thither an importunate *munshi* steered the Englishman, who, by this time, was beginning to persuade herself that he really was an accredited agent of Government, sent to report on the progress of Boondi. From a peepul–shaded courtyard came a clamour of young voices. Thirty or forty little ones, from five to eight years old, were sitting in an open verandah learning accounts and Hindustani, said the teacher. No need to ask from what castes they came, for it was written on their faces that they were Mahajans, Oswals, Aggerwals, and in one or two cases, it seemed, Sharawaks of Guzerat. They were learning the business of their lives, and, in time, would take their father's places, and show in how many ways money might be manipulated. Here the profession–type came out with startling distinctness. Through the chubbiness of almost babyhood, or the delicate suppleness of maturer years, in mouth and eyes and hands, it betrayed itself. The Rahtor, who comes of a fighting stock, is a fine animal, and well bred; the Hara, who seems to be more compactly built, is also a fine animal; but for a race that show blood in every line of their frame, from the arch of the instep to the modelling of the head, the financial—trading is too coarse a word—the financial class of Rajputana appears to be the most remarkable. Later in life may become clouded with fat jowl and paunch; but in his youth, his quick–eyed, nimble youth, the young Marwar, to give him his business title, is really a thing of beauty. His manners are courtly. The bare ground and a few slates sufficed for the children who were merely learning the ropes that drag States; but the English class, of boys from ten to twelve, was supplied with real benches and forms and a table with a cloth top. The assistant teacher, for the head was on leave, was a self–taught man of Boondi, young and delicate looking, who preferred reading to speaking English. His youngsters were supplied with "The Third English Reading Book," and were painfully thumbing their way through a doggerel poem about an "old man with hoary hair." One boy, bolder than the rest, slung an English sentence at the visitor, and collapsed. It was his little stock–in–trade, and the rest regarded him enviously. The Durbar supports the school, which is entirely free and open; a just distinction being maintained between the various castes. The old race prejudice against payment for knowledge came out in reply to a question. "You must not sell teaching," said the teacher; and the class murmured applausively,

"You must not sell teaching."

The population of Boondi seems more obviously mixed than that of the other States. There are four or five thousand Mahometans within its walls, and a sprinkling of aborigines of various varieties, besides the human raffle that the Bunjaras bring in their train, with Pathans and sleek Delhi men. The new heraldry of the State is curious—something after this sort. *Or*, a demi–god, *sable*, issuant of flames, holding in right hand a sword and in the left a bow—*all proper*. In chief, a dagger of the *second*, sheathed *vert*, fessewise over seven arrows in sheaf of the *second*. This latter blazon Boondi holds in commemoration of the defeat of an Imperial Prince who rebelled against the Delhi Throne in the days of Jehangir, when Boondi, for value received, took service under the Mahometan. It might also be, but here there is no certainty, the memorial of Rao Rutton's victory over Prince Khoorm, when the latter strove to raise all Rajputana against Jehangir his father; or of a second victory over a riotous lordling who harried Mewar a little later. For this exploit, the annals say, Jehangir gave Rao Rutton honorary flags and kettle–drums which may have been melted down by the science of the Heralds College into the blazon aforesaid. All the heraldry of Rajputana is curious, and, to such as hold that there is any worth in the "Royal Science," interesting. Udaipur's shield is, naturally *gules*, a sun in splendour, as befits the "children of the Sun and Fire," and one of the most ancient houses in India. Her crest is the straight Rajput sword, the *Khanda*, for an account of the worship of which very powerful divinity read Tod. The supporters are a Bhil and a Rajput, attired for the forlorn–hope; commemorating not only the defences of Chitor, but also the connection of the great Bappa Rawul with the Bhils, who even now play the principal part in the Crown–Marking of a Rana of Udaipur. Here, again, Tod explains the matter at length. Banswara claims alliance with Udaipur, and carries a sun, with a label of difference of some kind. Jeypore has the five–coloured flag of Amber with a sun, because the House claim descent from Rama, and her crest is a kuchnar tree, which is the bearing of Dasaratha, father of Rama. The white horse, which faces the tiger as supporter, may or may not be memorial of the great *aswamedha yuga*, or horse sacrifice, that Jey Singh, who built Jeypore, did—*not* carry out.

Jodhpur has the five–coloured flag, with a falcon, in which shape Durga, the patron Goddess of the State, has been sometimes good enough to appear. She has perched in the form of a wagtail on the howdah of the Chief of Jeysulmir, whose shield is blazoned with "forts in a desert land," and a naked left arm holding a broken spear, because, the legend goes, Jeysulmir was once galled by a horse with a magic spear. They tell the story to–day, but it is a long one. The

supporters of the shield—this is canting heraldry with a vengeance!—are antelopes of the desert spangled with gold coin, because the State was long the refuge of the wealthy bankers of India.

Bikanir, a younger House of Jodhpur, carries three white hawks on the five–coloured flag. The patron Goddess of Bikanir once turned the thorny jungle round the city to fruit trees, and the crest therefore is a green tree—strange emblem for a desert principality. The motto, however, is a good one. When the greater part of the Rajput States were vassals of Akbar, and he sent them abroad to do his will, certain Princes objected to crossing the Indus, and asked Bikanir to head the mutiny because his State was the least accessible. He consented, on condition that they would all for one day greet him thus: "*Jey Jangal dar Badshah!*" History shows what became of the objectors, and Bikanir's motto: "Hail to the King of the Waste!" proves that the tale *must* be true. But from Boondi to Bikanir is a long digression, bred by idleness on the bund of the Burra. It would have been sinful not to let down a line into those crowded waters, and the Guards, who were Mahometans, said that if the Sahib did not eat fish, they did. And the Sahib fished luxuriously, catching two and three pounders, of a perch–like build, whenever he chose to cast. He was wearied of schools and dispensaries, and the futility of heraldry accorded well with sloth—that is to say Boondi.

It should be noted, none the less, that in this part of the world the soberest mind will believe anything—believe in the ghosts by the Gau Mukh, and the dead Thakurs who get Out of their tombs and ride round the Burra Talao at Boondi—will credit every legend and lie that rises as naturally as the red flush of sunset, to gild the dead glories of Rajasthan.

XVII
Shows That There May be Poetry in a Bank, and Attempts to Show the Wonders of the Palace of Boondi

"This is a devil's place you have come to, Sahib. No grass for the horses, and the people don't understand anything, and their dirty *pice* are no good in Nasirabad. Look here." Ram Baksh wrathfully exhibited a handful of lumps of copper. The nuisance of taking a native out of his own beat is that he forthwith regards you not only as the author of his being, but of all his misfortunes as well. He is as hampering as a frightened child and as irritating as a man. "Padre Martum Sahib never came here," said Ram Baksh, with an air of one who had been led against his will into bad company.

A story about a rat that found a piece of turmeric and set up a bunnia's shop had sent the one–eyed *munshi* away, but a company of lesser *munshis*, runners, and the like were in attendance, and they said that money might be changed at the Treasury, which was in the Palace. It was quite impossible to change it anywhere else—there was no order. From the Sukh Mahal to the Palace the road ran through the heart of the city, and by reason of the continual shouting of the *munshis*, not more than ten thousand of the fifty thousand people of Boondi knew for what purpose the Sahib was journeying through their midst. Cataract was the most prevalent affliction, cataract in its worst forms, and it was, therefore, necessary that men should come very close to look at the stranger. They were in no sense rude, but they stared devoutly. "He has not come for *shikar*, and he will not take petitions. He has come to see the place, and God knows what he is." The description was quite correct, as far as it went; but, somehow or another, when shouted out at four crossways in the midst of a very pleasant little gathering it did not seem to add to dignity or command respect.

It has been written "the *coup d'oeil* of the castellated Palace of Boondi, from whichever side you approach it, is perhaps the most striking in India. Whoever has seen the Palace of Boondi can easily picture to himself the hanging gardens of Semiramis." This is true—and more too. To give on paper any adequate idea of the Boondi–ki–Mahal is impossible. Jeypore Palace may be called the Versailles of India; Udaipur's House of State is dwarfed by the hills round it and the spread of the Pichola Lake; Jodhpur's House of Strife, grey towers on red rock, is the work of giants, but the Palace of Boondi, even in broad

daylight, is such a Palace as men build for themselves in uneasy dreams—the work of goblins more than of men. It is built into and out of the hillside, in gigantic terrace on terrace, and dominates the whole of the city. But a detailed description of it were useless. Owing to the dip of the valley in which the city stands, it can only be well seen from one place, the main road of the city; and from that point looks like an avalanche of masonry ready to rush down and block the gorge. Like all the other Palaces of Rajputana, it is the work of many hands, and the present Raja has thrown out a bastion of no small size on one of the lower levels, which has been four or five years in the building. No one knows where the hill begins and where the Palace ends. Men say that there are subterranean chambers leading into the heart of the hills, and passages communicating with the extreme limits of Taragarh, the giant fortress that crowns the hill and flanks the whole of the valley on the Palace side. They say that there is as much room under as above ground, and that none have traversed the whole extent of the Palace. Looking at it from below, the Englishman could readily believe that nothing was impossible for those who had built it. The dominant impression was of height—height that heaved itself out of the hillside and weighed upon the eyelids of the beholder. The steep slope of the land had helped the builders in securing this effect. From the main road of the city a steep stone–paved ascent led to the first gate—name not communicated by the zealous following. Two gaudily painted fishes faced each other over the arch, and there was little except glaring colour ornamentation visible. This gate gave into what they called the *chowk* of the Palace, and one had need to look twice ere realising that this open space, crammed with human life, was a spur of the hill on which the Palace stood, paved and built over. There had been little attempt at levelling the ground. The foot–worn stones followed the contours of the ground, and ran up to the walls of the Palace smooth as glass. Immediately facing the Gate of the Fish was the Quarter–Guard barracks, a dark and dirty room, and here, in a chamber hollowed out in a wall, were stored the big drums of State, the *nakarras*. The appearance of the Englishman seemed to be the signal for smiting the biggest of all, and the dull thunder rolled up the Palace *chowk*, and came back from the unpierced Palace walls in hollow groaning. It was an eerie welcome—this single, sullen boom. In this enclosure, four hundred years ago, if the legend be true, a son of the great Rao Bando, who dreamed a dream as Pharaoh did and saved Boondi from famine, left a little band of Haras to wait his bidding while he went up into the Palace and slew his two uncles who had usurped the throne and abandoned the faith of their fathers. When he had pierced one and hacked the other, as they sat alone and unattended, he called out to his followers, who made a slaughter–

house of the enclosure and cut up the usurpers' adherents. At the best of times men slip on these smooth stones; and when the place was swimming in blood, foothold must have been treacherous indeed.

An inquiry for the place of the murder of the uncles—it is marked by a staircase slab, or Tod, the accurate, is at fault—was met by the answer that the Treasury was close at hand. They speak a pagan tongue in Boondi, swallow half their words, and adulterate the remainder with local patois. What can be extracted from a people who call four miles variously *do kosh*, *do kush*, *dhi hkas*, *doo–a koth*, and *diakast* all one word? The country–folk are quite unintelligible; which simplifies matters. It is the catching of a shadow of a meaning here and there, the hunting for directions cloaked in dialect, that is annoying. Foregoing his archæological researches, the Englishman sought the Treasury. He took careful notes; he even made a very bad drawing, but the Treasury of Boondi defied pinning down before the public. There was a gash in the brown flank of the Palace—and this gash was filled with people. A broken bees' comb with the whole hive busily at work on repairs will give a very fair idea of this extraordinary place—the Heart of Boondi. The sunlight was very vivid without and the shadows were heavy within, so that little could be seen except this clinging mass of humanity wriggling like maggots in a carcass. A stone staircase ran up to a rough verandah built out of the wall, and in the wall was a cave–like room, the guardian of whose depths was one of the refined financial classes, a man with very small hands and soft, low voice. He was girt with a sword, and held authority over the Durbar funds. He referred the Englishman courteously to another branch of the department, to find which necessitated a blundering progress up another narrow staircase crowded with loungers of all kinds. Here everything shone from constant contact of bare feet and hurrying bare shoulders. The staircase was the thing that, seen from without, had produced the bees' comb impression. At the top was a long verandah shaded from the sun, and here the Boondi Treasury worked, under the guidance of a grey–haired old man, whose sword lay by the side of his comfortably wadded cushion. He controlled twenty or thirty writers, each wrapped round a huge, country paper account–book, and each far too busy to raise his eyes.

The babble on the staircase might have been the noise of the sea so far as these men were concerned. It ebbed and flowed in regular beats, and spread out far into the courtyard below. Now and again the *click–click–click* of a scabbard tip being dragged against the wall, cut the dead sound of tramping naked feet, and a soldier would stumble up the narrow way into the sunlight. He was received, and sent back or forward by a knot of keen–eyed loungers, who seemed to act as a

buffer between the peace of the Secretariat and the pandemonium of the Administrative. *Saises* and grass–cutters, mahouts of elephants, brokers, mahajuns, villagers from the district, and here and there a shock–headed aborigine, swelled the mob on and at the foot of the stairs. As they came up, they met the buffer–men who spoke in low voices and appeared to filter them according to their merits. Some were sent to the far end of the verandah, where everything melted away in a fresh crowd of dark faces. Others were sent back, and joined the detachment shuffling for their shoes in the *chowk*. One servant of the Palace withdrew himself to the open, underneath the verandah, and there sat yapping from time to time like a hungry dog: "The grass! The grass! The grass!" But the men with the account–books never stirred. And they bowed their heads gravely and made entry or erasure, turning back the rustling leaves. Not often does a reach of the River of Life so present itself that it can without alteration be transferred to canvas. But the Treasury of Boondi, the view up the long verandah, stood complete and ready for any artist who cared to make it his own. And by that lighter and less malicious irony of Fate, who is always giving nuts to those who have no teeth, the picture was clinched and brought together by a winking, brass hookah–bowl of quaint design, pitched carelessly upon a roll of dull red cloth in the foreground. The faces of the accountants were of pale gold, for they were an untanned breed, and the face of the old man, their controller, was frosted silver.

It was a strange Treasury, but no other could have suited the Palace. The Englishman watched, open–mouthed, blaming himself because he could not catch the meaning of the orders given to the flying chaprassies, nor make anything of the hum in the verandah and the tumult on the stairs. The old man took the commonplace currency note and announced his willingness to give change in silver. "We have no small notes here," he said. "They are not wanted. In a little while, when you next bring the Honour of your Presence this way, you shall find the silver."

The Englishman was taken down the steps and fell into the arms of a bristly giant who had left his horse in the courtyard, and the giant spoke at length waving his arms in the air, but the Englishman could not understand him and dropped into the hubbub at the Palace foot. Except the main lines of the building there is nothing straight or angular about it. The rush of people seems to have rounded and softened every corner, as a river grinds down boulders. From the lowest tier, two zigzags, all of rounded stones sunk in mortar, took the Englishman to a gate where two carved elephants were thrusting at each other over the arch; and, because neither he nor any one round him could give the gate a name, he called it the "Gate of the

Elephants." Here the noise from the Treasury was softened, and entry through the gate brought him into a well–known world, the drowsy peace of a King's Palace. There was a courtyard surrounded by stables, in which were kept chosen horses, and two or three grooms were sleeping in the sun. There was no other life except the whir and coo of the pigeons. In time—though there really is no such a thing as time off the line of railway—an official appeared begirt with the skewer–like keys that open the native bayonet–locks, each from six inches to a foot long. Where was the Raj Mahal in which, sixty–six years ago, Tod formally installed Ram Singh, "who is now in his eleventh year, fair and with a lively, intelligent cast of face"? The warden made no answer, but led to a room, overlooking the courtyard, in which two armed men stood before an empty throne of white marble. They motioned silently that none must pass immediately before the seat of the King, but go round, keeping to the far side of the double row of pillars. Near the walls were stone slabs pierced to take the butts of long, venomous, black bamboo lances; rude coffers were disposed about the room, and ruder sketches of Ganesh adorned the walls. "The men," said the warden, "watch here day and night because this place is the Rutton Daulat." That, you will concede, is lucid enough. He who does not understand it, may go to for a thick–headed barbarian.

From the Rutton Daulat the warden unlocked doors that led into a hall of audience—the Chutter Mahal—built by Raja Chutter Lal, who was killed more than two hundred years ago in the latter days of Shah Jehan for whom he fought. Two rooms, each supported on double rows of pillars, flank the open space, in the centre of which is a marble reservoir. Here the Englishman looked anxiously for some of the atrocities of the West, and was pleased to find that, with the exception of a vase of artificial flowers and a clock, there was nothing that jarred with the exquisite pillars, and the raw blaze of colour in the roofs of the rooms. In the middle of these impertinent observations, something sighed—sighed like a distressed ghost. Unaccountable voices are at all times unpleasant, especially when the hearer is some hundred feet or so above ground in an unknown Palace in an unknown land. A gust of wind had found its way through one of the latticed balconies, and had breathed upon a thin plate of metal, some astrological instrument, slung gongwise on a tripod. The tone was as soft as that of an Æolian harp, and, because of the surroundings, infinitely more plaintive.

There was an inlaid ivory door, set in lintel and posts crusted with looking–glass—all apparently old work. This opened into a darkened room where there were gilt and silver charpoys, and portraits, in the native fashion, of the illustrious dead of Boondi. Beyond the darkness was a balcony clinging to the sheer side of the

Palace, and it was then that the Englishman realised to what a height he had climbed without knowing it. He looked down upon the bustle of the Treasury and the stream of life flowing into and out of the Gate of the Fishes where the big drums lie. Lifting his eyes, he saw how Boondi City had built itself, spreading from west to east as the confined valley became too narrow and the years more peaceable. The Boondi hills are the barrier that separates the stony, uneven ground near Deoli from the flats of Kotah, twenty miles away. From the Palace balcony the road to the eye is clear to the banks of the Chumbul River, which was the Debatable Ford in times gone by and was leaped, as all rivers with any pretensions to a pedigree have been, by more than one magic horse. Northward and easterly the hills run out to Indurgarh, and southward and westerly to territory marked "disputed" on the map in the present year of grace. From this balcony the Raja can see to the limit of his territory eastward, his empire all under his hand. He is, or the Politicals err, that same Ram Singh who was installed by Tod in 1821, and for whose success in killing his first deer, Tod was, by the Queen–Mother of Boondi, bidden to rejoice. To–day the people of Boondi say: "This Durbar is very old; so old that few men remember its beginning, for that was in our father's time." It is related also of Boondi that, on the occasion of the Queen's Jubilee, they said proudly that their ruler had reigned for sixty years, and he was a man. They saw nothing astonishing in the fact of a woman having reigned for fifty. History does not say whether they jubilated; for there are no Englishmen in Boondi to write accounts of demonstrations and foundation–stone laying to the daily newspaper, and Boondi is very, very small. In the early morning you may see a man pantingly chased out of the city by another man with a naked sword. This is the mail and the mail–guard; and the effect is as though runner and swordsman lay under a doom—the one to fly with the fear of death always before him, as men fly in dreams, and the other to perpetually fail of his revenge.

The warden unlocked more doors and led the Englishman still higher, but into a garden—a heavily timbered garden with a tank for gold fish in the midst. For once the impassive following smiled when they saw that the Englishman was impressed.

"This," said they, "is the Rang Bilas." "But who made it?" "Who knows? It was made long ago." The Englishman looked over the garden–wall, a foot–high parapet, and shuddered. There was only the flat side of the Palace, and a drop on to the stones of the zigzag scores of feet below. Above him was the riven hillside and the decaying wall of Taragarh, and behind him this fair garden, hung like Mahomet's coffin, but full of the noise of birds and the talking of the wind in the branches. The warden entered into a lengthy explanation of the nature

of the delusion, showing how—but he was stopped before he was finished. His listener did not want to know "how the trick was done." Here was the garden, and there were three or four storeys climbed to reach it. At one end of the garden was a small room, under treatment by native artists who were painting the panels with historical pictures, in distemper. Theirs was florid polychromatic art, but skirting the floor was a series of frescoes in red, black, and white, of combats with elephants, bold and temperate as good German work. They were worn and defaced in places; but the hand of some bygone limner, who did not know how to waste a line, showed under the bruises and scratches, and put the newer work to shame.

Here the tour of the Palace ended; and it must be remembered that the Englishman had not gone the depth of three rooms into one flank. Acres of building lay to the right of him, and above the lines of the terraces he could see the tops of green trees. "Who knew how many gardens, such as the Rang Bilas, were to be found in the Palace?" No one answered directly, but all said that there were many. The warden gathered up his keys, and, locking each door behind him as he passed, led the way down to earth. But before he had crossed the garden the Englishman heard, deep down in the bowels of the Palace, a woman's voice singing, and the voice rang as do voices in caves. All Palaces in India excepting dead ones, such as that of Amber, are full of eyes. In some, as has been said, the idea of being watched is stronger than in others. In Boondi Palace it was overpowering—being far worse than in the green shuttered corridors of Jodhpur. There were trap–doors on the tops of terraces, and windows veiled in foliage, and bull's–eyes set low in unexpected walls, and many other peep–holes and places of vantage. In the end, the Englishman looked devoutly at the floor, but when the voice of the woman came up from under his feet, he felt that there was nothing left for him but to go. Yet, excepting only this voice, there was deep silence everywhere, and nothing could be seen.

The warden returned to the Chutter Mahal to pick up a lost key. The brass table of the planets was sighing softly to itself as it swung to and fro in the wind. That was the last view of the interior of the Palace, the empty court, and the swinging, sighing astrolabe.

About two hours afterwards, when he had reached the other side of the valley and seen the full extent of the buildings, the Englishman began to realise first that he had not been taken through one–tenth of the Palace; and secondly, that he would do well to measure its extent by acres, in preference to meaner measures. But what made him blush hotly, all alone among the tombs on the hillside, was the idea that he with his ridiculous demands for eggs, firewood, and sweet drinking water should have clattered and chattered through any part of it at all.

He began to understand why Boondi does not encourage Englishmen.

XVIII
Of the Uncivilised Night and the Departure to Things Civilised. Showing How a Friend May Keep an Appointment Too Well

"Let us go hence my songs, she will not hear. Let us go hence together without fear." But Ram Baksh the irrepressible sang it in altogether a baser key. He came by night to the pavilion on the lake, while the sepoys were cooking their fish, and reiterated his whine about the devildom of the country into which the Englishman had dragged him. Padre Martum Sahib would never have thus treated the owner of sixteen horses, all fast and big ones, and eight superior "shutin–tongas." "Let us get away," said Ram Baksh. "You are not here for *shikar*, and the water is very bad." It was indeed, except when taken from the lake, and then it only tasted fishy. "We will go, Ram Baksh," said the Englishman. "We will go in the very early morning, and in the meantime here is fish to stay your stomach with."

When a transparent piece of canvas, which fails by three feet to reach ceiling or floor, is the only bar between the East and the West, he would be a churl indeed who stood upon invidious race distinctions. The Englishman went out and fraternised with the Military—the four–rupee soldiers of Boondi who guarded him. They were armed, one with an old Tower musket crazy as to nipple and hammer, one with a native–made smooth–bore, and one with a composite contrivance—English sporting muzzle–loader stock with a compartment for a jointed cleaning–rod, and hammered octagonal native barrel, wire–fastened, a tuft of cotton on the foresight. All three guns were loaded, and the owners were very proud of them. They were simple folk, these men–at–arms, with an inordinate appetite for broiled fish. They were not *always* soldiers they explained. They cultivated their crops until called for any duty that might turn up. They were paid now and again, at intervals, but they were paid in coin and not in kind.

The *munshis* and the vakils and the runners had departed after seeing that the Englishman was safe for the night, so the freedom of the little gathering on the bund was unrestrained. The *chowkidar* came out of his cave into the firelight. He took a fish and incontinently choked, for he was a feeble old man. Set right again, he launched into a very long and quite unintelligible story while the sepoys said reverently: "He is an old man and remembers many things." As he babbled, the night shut in upon the lake and the valley of Boondi. The

last cows were driven into the water for their evening drink, the waterfowl and the monkeys went to bed, and the stars came out and made a new firmament in the untroubled bosom of the lake. The light of the fire showed the ruled lines of the bund springing out of the soft darkness of the wooded hill on the left and disappearing into the solid darkness of a bare hill on the right. Below the bund a man cried aloud to keep wandering pigs from the gardens whose tree–tops rose to a level with the bund–edge. Beyond the trees all was swaddled in gloom. When the gentle buzz of the unseen city died out, it seemed as though the bund were the very Swordwide Bridge that runs, as every one knows, between this world and the next. The water lapped and muttered, and now and again a fish jumped, with the shatter of broken glass, blurring the peace of the reflected heavens.

> "And duller should I be than some fat weed
> That rolls itself at ease on Lethe's wharf."

The poet who wrote those lines knew nothing whatever of Lethe's wharf. The Englishman had found it, and it seemed to him, at that hour and in that place, that it would be good and desirable never to return to the Commissioners and the Deputy Commissioners any more, but to lie at ease on the warm sunlit bund by day, and, at night, near a shadow–breeding fire, to listen for the strangled voices and whispers of the darkness in the hills. Thus after as long a life as the *chowkidar's*, dying easily and pleasantly, and being buried in a red tomb on the borders of the lake. Surely no one would come to reclaim him, across those weary, weary miles of rock–strewn road…. "And this," said the *chowkidar*, raising his voice to enforce attention, "is true talk. Everybody knows it, and now the Sahib knows it. I am an old man." He fell asleep at once, with his head on the clay pipe that was doing duty for a whole *huqa* among the company. He had been talking for nearly a quarter of an hour.

See how great a man is the true novelist! Six or seven thousand miles away, Walter Besant of the Golden Pen had created Mr. Maliphant—the ancient of figure–heads in the *All Sorts and Conditions of Men*, and here, in Boondi, the Englishman had found Mr. Maliphant in the withered flesh. So he drank Walter Besant's health in the water of the Burra Talao. One of the sepoys turned himself round, with a clatter of accoutrements, shifted his blanket under his elbow, and told a tale. It had something to do with his *khet*, and a *gunna* which certainly was not sugar–cane. It was elusive. At times it seemed that it was a woman, then changed to a right of way, and lastly appeared to be a tax; but the more he attempted to get at its meaning through the curious patois in which its doings or its merits were enveloped, the

more dazed the Englishman became. None the less the story was a fine one, embellished with much dramatic gesture which told powerfully against the firelight. Then the second sepoy, who had been enjoying the pipe all the time, told a tale, the purport of which was that the dead in the tombs round the lake were wont to get up of nights and go hunting. This was a fine and ghostly story; and its dismal effect was much heightened by some clamour of the night far up the lake beyond the floor of stars.

The third sepoy said nothing. He had eaten too much fish and was fast asleep by the side of the *chowkidar*.

They were all Mahometans, and consequently all easy to deal with. A Hindu is an excellent person, but … but … there is no knowing what is in his heart, and he is hedged about with so many strange observances.

This Hindu or Musalman bent, which each Englishman's mind must take before he has been three years in the country, is, of course, influenced by Province or Presidency. In Rajputana generally, the Political swears by the Hindu, and holds that the Mahometan is untrustworthy. But a man who will eat with you and take your tobacco, sinking the fiction that it has been doctored with infidel wines, cannot be very bad after all.

That night when the tales were all told and the guard, bless them, were snoring peaceably in the starlight, a man came stealthily into the enclosure of canvas and woke the Englishman, muttering "Sahib, Sahib," in his ear. It was no robber but some poor devil with a petition —a grimy, welted paper. He was absolutely unintelligible, and stammered almost to dumbness. He stood by the bed, alternately bowing to the earth and standing erect, his arms spread aloft, and his whole body working as he tried to force out some rebellious word in a key that should not wake the men without. What could the Englishman do? He was no Government servant, and had no concern with petitions. The man clicked and choked and gasped in his desperate desire to make the Sahib understand. But it was no use; and in the end he departed as he had come–bowed, abject, and unintelligible.

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Let every word written against Ganesh be rescinded. It was by his ordering that the Englishman saw such a dawn on the Burra Talao as he had never before set eyes on. Every fair morning is a reprint, blurred perhaps, of the First Day; but this splendour was a thing to be put aside from all other days and remembered. The stars had no fire in

them and the fish had stopped jumping, when the black water of the lake paled and grew grey. While he watched it seemed to the Englishman that voices on the hills were intoning the first verses of Genesis. The grey light moved on the face of the waters till, with no interval, a blood–red glare shot up from the horizon and, inky black against the intense red, a giant crane floated out towards the sun. In the still–shadowed city the great Palace Drum boomed and throbbed to show that the gates were open, while the dawn swept up the valley and made all things clear. The blind man who said, "The blast of a trumpet is red," spoke only the truth. The breaking of the red dawn is like the blast of a trumpet.

"What," said the *chowkidar*, picking the ashes of the overnight fire out of his beard, "what, I say, are five eggs or twelve eggs to such a Raj as ours? What also are fowls—what are" … "There was no talk of fowls. Where is the fowl–man from whom you got the eggs?" "He is here. No, he is there. I do not know. I am an old man, and I and the Raj supply everything without price. The fowl–man will be paid by the State—liberally paid. Let the Sahib be happy. *Wah. Wah.*"

Experience of forced labour in Himalayan villages had made the Englishman very tender in raising supplies that were given gratis; but the fowl–man could not be found, and the value of his wares was, later, paid to Ganesh—Ganesh of Situr, for that is the name of the village full of priests, through which the Englishman had passed in ignorance two days before. A double handful of sweet smelling flowers made the receipt.

Boondi was wide–awake before half–past seven in the morning. Her hunters, on foot and on horse, were filing towards the Deoli Gate. They would hunt tiger and deer they said, even with matchlocks and muzzle loaders as uncouth as those the Sahib saw. They were a merry company and chaffed the Quarter–Guard at the gate unmercifully when a bullock–cart, laden with the cases of the "Batoum Naphtha and Oil Company" blocked the road. One of them had been a soldier of the Queen, and, excited by the appearance of a Sahib, did so rebuke and badger the Quarter–Guard for their slovenliness that they threatened to come out of the barracks and destroy him.

So, after one last look at the Palace high up the hillside, the Englishman was borne away along the Deoli Road. The peculiarity of Boondi is the peculiarity of the covered pitfall. One does not see it till one falls into it. A quarter of a mile from the gate, town and Palace were invisible. But the Englishman was grieved at heart. He had fallen in love with Boondi the beautiful, and believed that he would never again see anything half so fair. The utter untouchedness of the town was one–half the charm and its association the other. Read Tod, who is far too good to be chipped or sampled; read Tod luxuriously on the

bund of the Burra Talao, and the spirit of the place will enter into you and you will be happy.

To enjoy life thoroughly, haste and bustle must be abandoned. Ram Baksh has said that Englishmen are always bothering to go forward, and for this reason, though beyond doubt they pay well and readily, are not wise men. He gave utterance to this philosophy after he had mistaken his road and pulled up in what must have been a disused quarry hard by a cane–field. There were patches and pockets of cultivation along the rocky road, where men grew cotton, chillies, tobacco, and sugar–cane. "I will get you sugar–cane," said Ram Baksh. "Then we will go forward, and perhaps some of these jungly–fools will tell us where the road is." A "jungly fool," a tender of goats, did in time appear, but there was no hurry; the sugar–cane was sweet and purple and the sun warm.

The Englishman lay out at high noon on the crest of a rolling upland crowned with rock, and heard, as a loafer had told him he would hear, the "set of the day," which is as easily discernible as the change of tone between the rising and the falling tide. At a certain hour the impetus of the morning dies out, and all things, living and inanimate, turn their thoughts to the prophecy of the coming night. The little wandering breezes drop for a time, and, when they blow afresh, bring the message. The "set of the day," as the loafer said, has changed, the machinery is beginning to run down, the unseen tides of the air are falling. This moment of change can only be felt in the open and in touch with the earth, and once discovered, seems to place the finder in deep accord and fellowship with all things on earth. Perhaps this is why the genuine loafer, though "frequently drunk," is "always polite to the stranger," and shows such a genial tolerance towards the weaknesses of mankind, black, white, or brown.

In the evening when the jackals were scuttling across the roads and the cranes had gone to roost, came Deoli the desolate, and an unpleasant meeting. Six days away from his kind had bred in a Cockney heart a great desire to see a fellow–subject. An elaborate loaf through the cantonment—fifteen minutes' walk from end to end—showed only one distant dog–cart and a small English child with an ayah. There was grass in the soldierly straight roads, and some of the cross–cuts had never been used at all since the days when the cantonment had been first laid out. In the western corner lay the cemetery—the only carefully tended and newly whitewashed thing in this God–forgotten place. Some years ago a man had said good–by to the Englishman; adding cheerily: "We shall meet again. The world's a very little place y' know."

His prophecy was a true one, for the two met indeed, but the prophet was lying in Deoli Cemetery near the well, which is decorated

so ecclesiastically with funeral urns.

XIX
Comes Back to the Railway, After Reflections on the Management of the Empire; and So Home Again, With Apology to All Who Have Read Thus Far

In the morning the tonga rattled past Deoli Cemetery into the open, where the Deoli Irregulars were drilling. They marked the beginning of civilisation and white shirts; and so they seemed altogether detestable. Yet another day's jolting, enlivened by the philosophy of Ram Baksh, and then came Nasirabad. The last pair of ponies suggested serious thought. They had covered eighteen miles at an average speed of eight miles an hour, and were well–conditioned little rats. "A Colonel Sahib gave me this one for a present," said Ram Baksh, flicking the near one. "It was his child's pony. The child was five years old." When he went away, the Colonel Sahib said: "Ram Baksh, you are a good man. Never have I seen such a good man. This horse is yours." Ram Baksh was getting a horse's work out of a child's pony. Surely we in India work the land much as the Colonel Sahib worked his son's mount; making it do child's work when so much more can be screwed out of it. A native and a native State deals otherwise with horse and holding. Perhaps our extreme scrupulousness in handling may be statecraft, but, after even a short sojourn in places which are dealt with not so tenderly, it seems absurd. There are States where things are done, and done without protest, that would make the hair of the educated native stand on end with horror. These things are of course not expedient to write; because their publication would give a great deal of unnecessary pain and heart–searching to estimable native administrators who have the hope of a Star before their eyes and would not better matters in the least.

Note this fact though. With the exception of such journals as, occupying a central position in British territory, levy blackmail from the neighbouring States, there are no independent papers in Rajputana. A King may start a weekly, to encourage a taste for Sanskrit and high Hindi, or a Prince may create a Court Chronicle; but that is all. A "free press" is not allowed, and this the native journalist knows. With good management he can, keeping under the shadow of our flag, raise two hundred rupees from a big man here, and five hundred from a rich man there, but he does not establish himself across the Border. To one who has reason to hold a stubborn disbelief in even the elementary morality of the native press, this bashfulness

and lack of enterprise is amusing. But to return to the native States' administrations. There is nothing exactly wrong in the methods of government that are overlaid with English terms and forms. They are vigorous, in certain points; and where they are not vigorous, there is a cheery happy–go–luckiness about the arrangement that must be seen to be understood. The shift and play of a man's fortune across the Border is as sudden as anything in the days of Haroun–al–Raschid of blessed memory, and there are stories, to be got for the unearthing, as wild and as improbable as those in the *Thousand and One Nights*. Most impressive of all is the way in which the country is "used," and its elasticity under pressure. In the good old days the Durbar raised everything it could from the people, and the King spent as much as ever he could on his personal pleasures. Now the institution of the Political agent has stopped the grabbing, for which, by the way, some of the monarchs are not in the least grateful—and smoothed the outward face of things. But there is still a difference, between our ways and the ways of the other places. A year spent among native States ought to send a man back to the Decencies and the Law Courts and the Rights of the Subject with a supreme contempt for those who rave about the oppressions of our brutal bureaucracy. One month nearly taught an average Englishman that it was the proper thing to smite anybody of mean aspect and obstructive tendencies on the mouth with a shoe. Hear what an intelligent loafer said. His words are at least as valuable as these babblings. He was, as usual, wonderfully drunk, and the gift of speech came upon him. The conversation—he was a great politician, this loafer—had turned on the poverty of India. "Poor?" said he. "Of course, it's poor. Oh, yes, d—d poor. And I'm poor, an' you're poor, altogether. Do you expect people will give you money without you ask 'em? No, I tell you, Sir, there's enough money in India to pave Hell with if you could only get at it. I've kep' servants in my day. Did they ever leave me without a hundred or a hundred and fifty rupees put by—and never touched? You mark that. Does any black man who had been in Guv'ment service go away without hundreds an' hundreds put by, and never touched? You mark that. Money? The place stinks o' money—just kept out o' sight. Do you ever know a native that didn't say *Garib admi* (I'm a poor man)? They've been sayin' *Garib admi* so long that the Guv'ment learns to believe 'em, and now they're all bein' treated as though they was paupers. I'm a pauper, an' you're a pauper—*we* 'aven't got anything hid in the ground—an' so's every white man in this forsaken country. But the Injian he's a rich man. How do I know? Because I've tramped on foot, or warrant pretty well from one end of the place to the other, an' I know what I'm talkin' about, and this 'ere Guv'ment goes peckin' an' fiddlin' over its tuppenny–ha'penny little taxes as if it was afraid. Which it is. You see

how they do things in —. It's six sowars here, and ten sowars there, and—'Pay up, you brutes, or we'll pull your ears over your head.' And when they've taken all they can get, the headman, he says: 'This is a dashed poor yield. I'll come again.' *Of course* the people digs up something out of the ground, and they pay. I know the way it's done, and that's the way to do it. You can't go to an Injian an' say: 'Look here. Can you pay me five rupees?' He says: '*Garib admi*,' of course, an' would say it if he was as rich as banker. But if you send half a dozen swords at him and shift the thatch off of his roof, he'll pay. Guv'ment can't do that. I don't suppose it could. There is no reason why it shouldn't. But it might do something like it, to show that it wasn't going to have no nonsense. Why, I'd undertake to raise a hundred million—what am I talking of?—a hundred and fifty million pounds from this country *per annum*, and it wouldn't be strained *then*. One hundred and fifty millions you could raise as easy as paint, if you just made these 'ere Injians understand that they had to pay an' make no bones about it. It's enough to make a man sick to go in over yonder to — and see what they do; and then come back an' see what we do. Perfectly sickenin' it is. Borrer money? Why the country could pay herself an' everything she wants, if she was only made to do it. It's this blooomin' *Garib admi* swindle that's been going on all these years, that has made fools o' the Guv'ment."

Then he became egotistical, this ragged ruffian who conceived that he knew the road to illimitable wealth and told the story of his life, interspersed with anecdotes that would blister the paper they were written on. But through all his ravings, he stuck to his hundred–and–fifty–million theory, and though the listener dissented from him and the brutal cruelty with which his views were stated, an unscientific impression remained not to be shaken off. Across the Border one feels that the country is being used, exploited, "made to sit up," so to speak. In our territories the feeling is equally strong of wealth "just round the corner," as the loafer said, of a people wrapped up in cotton wool and ungetatable. Will any man, who really knows something of a little piece of India and has not the fear of running counter to custom before his eyes, explain how this impression is produced, and why it is an erroneous one?

Nasirabad marked the end of the Englishman's holiday, and there was sorrow in his heart. "Come back again," said Ram Baksh, cheerfully, "and bring a gun with you. Then I'll take you to Gungra, and I'll drive you myself. 'Drive you just as well as I've driven these four days past." An amicable open–minded soul was Ram Baksh. May his tongas never grow less!

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"This 'ere Burma fever is a bad thing to have. It's pulled me down awful; an' now I am going to Peshawar. Are you the Station–master?" It was Thomas—white–cheeked, sunken–eyed, drawn–mouthed Thomas—travelling from Nasirabad to Peshawar on pass; and with him was a Corporal new to his stripes and doing station duty. Every Thomas is interesting, except when he is too drunk to speak. This Thomas was an enthusiast. He had volunteered, from a Home–going regiment shattered by Burma fever, into a regiment at Peshawar, had broken down at Nasirabad on his way up with his draft, and was now journeying into the unknown to pick up another medal. "There's sure to be something on the Frontier," said this gaunt, haggard boy—he was little more, though he reckoned four years' service and considered himself somebody. "When there's anything going, Peshawar's the place to be in, they tell me; but I hear we shall have to march down to Calcutta in no time." The Corporal was a little man and showed his friend off with great pride: "Ah, you should have come to *us*," said he; "we're the regiment, we are." "Well, I went with the rest of our men," said Thomas. "There's three hundred of us volunteered to stay on, and we all went for the same regiment. Not but what I'm saying yours is a good regiment," he added with grave courtesy. This loosed the Corporal's tongue, and he descanted on the virtues of the regiment and the merits of the officers. It has been written that Thomas is devoid of *esprit de corps*, because of the jerkiness of the arrangements under which he now serves. If this be true, he manages to conceal his feelings very well; for he speaks most fluently in praise of his own regiment; and, for all his youth, has a keen appreciation of the merits of his officers. Go to him when his heart is opened, and hear him going through the roll of the subalterns, by a grading totally unknown in the Army List, and you will pick up something worth the hearing. Thomas, with the Burma fever on him, tried to cut in, from time to time, with stories of his officers and what they had done "when we was marchin' all up and down Burma," but the little Corporal went on gayly.

They made a curious contrast—these two types. The lathy, town–bred Thomas with hock–bottle shoulders, a little education, and a keen desire to get more medals and stripes; and the little, deep–chested, bull–necked Corporal brimming over with vitality and devoid of any ideas beyond the "regiment." And the end of both lives, in all likelihood, would be a nameless grave in some cantonment burying–ground with, if the case were specially interesting and the Regimental Doctor had a turn for the pen, an obituary notice in the Indian Medical Journal. It was an unpleasant thought.

From the Army to the Navy is a perfectly natural transition, but one hardly to be expected in the heart of India. Dawn showed the

railway carriage full of riotous boys, for the Agra and Mount Abu schools had broken up for holidays. Surely it was natural enough to ask a child—not a boy, but a child—whether he was going home for the holidays; and surely it was a crushing, a petrifying thing to hear in a clear treble tinged with icy scorn: "No. I'm on leave. I'm a midshipman." Two "officers of Her Majesty's Navy"—mids of a man–o'–war at Bombay—were going up–country on ten days' leave. They had not travelled much more than twice round the world; but they should have printed the fact on a label. They chattered like daws, and their talk was as a whiff of fresh air from the open sea, while the train ran eastward under the Aravalis. At that hour their lives were bound up in and made glorious by the hope of riding a horse when they reached their journey's end. Much had they seen "cities and men," and the artless way in which they interlarded their conversation with allusions to "one of those shore–going chaps, you see," was delicious. They had no cares, no fears, no servants, and an unlimited stock of wonder and admiration for everything they saw, from the "cute little well–scoops" to a herd of deer grazing on the horizon. It was not until they had opened their young hearts with infantile abandon that the listener could guess from the incidental *argot* where these pocket–Ulysseses had travelled. South African, Norwegian, and Arabian words were used to help out the slang of shipboard, and a copious vocabulary of shipboard terms, complicated with modern Greek. As free from self–consciousness as children, as ignorant as beings from another planet of the Anglo–Indian life into which they were going to dip for a few days, shrewd and observant as befits men of the world who have authority, and neat–handed and resourceful as — blue–jackets, they were a delightful study, and accepted freely and frankly the elaborate apologies tendered to them for the unfortunate mistake about the "holidays." The roads divided and they went their way; and there was a shadow after they had gone, for the Globe–trotter said to his wife, "What I like about Jeypore"—accent on the first syllable, if you please—"is its characteristic easternness." And the Globe–trotter's wife said: "Yes. It is purely Oriental."

This was Jeypore with the gas–jets and the water–pipes as was shown at the beginning of these trivial letters; and the Globe–trotter and his wife had not been to Amber. Joyful thought! They had not seen the soft splendours of Udaipur, the nightmare of Chitor, the grim power of Jodhpur, and the virgin beauties of Boondi—fairest of all places that the Englishman had set eyes on. The Globe–trotter was great in the matter of hotels and food, but he had not lain under the shadow of a tonga in soft warm sand, eating cold pork with a pocket–knife, and thanking Providence who put sweet–water streams where wayfarers wanted them. He had not drunk out the brilliant cold–

weather night in the company of a King of Loafers, a grimy scallawag with a six days' beard and an unholy knowledge of native States. He had attended service in cantonment churches; but he had not known what it was to witness the simple, solemn ceremonial in the dining room of a far–away Residency, when all the English folk within a hundred–mile circuit bowed their heads before the God of the Christians. He had blundered about temples of strange deities with a guide at his elbow; but he had not known what it was to attempt conversation, with a temple dancing–girl (*not* such an one as Edwin Arnold invented), and to be rewarded for a misturned compliment with a deftly heaved bunch of marigold buds in his respectable bosom. Yet he had undoubtedly lost much, and the measure of his loss was proven in his estimate of the Orientalism of Jeypore.

But what had he who sat in judgment upon him gained? One perfect month of loaferdom, to be remembered above all others and the night of the visit to Chitor, to be remembered even when the month is forgotten. Also the sad knowledge that of all the fair things seen, the inept pen gives but a feeble and blurred picture.

Let those who have read to the end, pardon a hundred blemishes.

Part II
From Sea to Sea - March-september, 1889

No. I

Of Freedom and the Necessity of Using Her. the Motive and the Scheme That Will Come to Nothing. a Disquisition Upon the Otherness of Things and the Torments of the Damned - When All the World is Young, Lad, and All the Trees Are Green, and Every Goose a Swan, Lad, and Every Lass a Queen,-- Then Hey for Boot and Horse, Lad, and O'er the World Away-- Young Blood Must Have Its Course, Lad, and Every Dog Its Day

After seven years it pleased Necessity, whom we all serve, to turn to me and say: "Now you need do Nothing Whatever. You are free to enjoy yourself. I will take the yoke of bondage from your neck for one year. What do you choose to do with my gift?" And I considered the matter in several lights. At first I held notions of regenerating Society; but it appeared that this would demand more than a year, and perhaps Society would not be grateful after all. Then I would fain enter upon one monumental "bust"; but I reflected that this at the outside could endure but three months, while the headache would last for nine. Then came by the person that I most hate,—a Globe–trotter. He, sitting in my chair, discussed India with the unbridled arrogance of five weeks on a Cook's ticket. He was from England and had dropped his manners in the Suez Canal. "I assure you," said he, "that you who live so close to the actual facts of things cannot form dispassionate judgments of their merits. You are too near. Now I—" he waved his hand modestly and left me to fill the gaps.

I considered him, from his new helmet to his deck–shoes, and I perceived that he was but an ordinary man. I thought of India, maligned and silent India, given up to the ill–considered wanderings of such as he—of the land whose people are too busy to reply to the libels upon their life and manners. It was my destiny to avenge India upon nothing less than three–quarters of the world. The idea necessitated sacrifices,—painful sacrifices,—for I had to become a Globe–trotter, with a helmet and deck–shoes. In the interests of our little world I would endure these things and more. I would deliver "brawling judgments all day long; on all things unashamed." I would go toward the rising sun till I reached the heart of the world and once more smelt London asphalt.

The Indian public never gave me a brief. I took it, appointing myself Commissioner in General for Our Own Sweet Selves. Then all the aspects of life changed, as, they say, the appearance of his room grows strange to a dying man when he sees it upon the last morning, and knows that it will confront him no more. I had wilfully stepped aside from the current of our existence, and had no part in any of Our

interests. Up–country the peach was beginning to bud, and men said that by cause of the heavy snows in the Hills the hot weather would be a short one. That was nothing to me. The punkahs and their pullers sat together in the verandah, and the public buildings spawned thermantidotes. The copper–smith sang in the garden and the early wasp hummed low down by the door–handle, and they prophesied of the hot weather to come. These things were no concern of mine. I was dead, and looked upon the old life as a dead man—without interest and without concern.

It was a strange life; I had lived it for seven years or one day, I could not be certain which. All that I knew was that I could watch men going to their offices, while I slept luxuriously; could go out at any hour of the day and sit up to any hour of the night, secure that each morning would bring no toil. I understood with what emotions the freed convict regards the prison he has quitted—insight which had hitherto been denied me; and I further saw how intense is the selfishness of the irresponsible man. Some said that the coming year would be one of scarcity and distress because unseasonable rains were falling. I was grieved. I feared that the Rains might break the railway line to the sea, and so delay my departure. Again, the season would be a sickly one. I fancied that Necessity might repent of her gift and for mere jest wipe me off the face of the earth ere I had seen anything of what lay upon it. There was trouble on the Afghan frontier; perhaps an army–corps would be mobilised, and perhaps many men would die, leaving folk to mourn for them at the hill–stations. My dread was that a Russian man–of–war might intercept the steamer which carried my precious self between Yokohama and San Francisco. Let Armageddon be postponed, I prayed, for my sake, that my personal enjoyments may not be interfered with. War, famine, and pestilence would be so inconvenient to me. And I abased myself before Necessity, the great Goddess, and said ostentatiously: "It is naught, it is naught, and you needn't look at me when I wander about." Surely we are only virtuous by compulsion of earning our daily bread.

So I looked upon men with new eyes, and pitied them very much indeed. They worked. They had to. I was an aristocrat. I could call upon them at inconvenient hours and ask them why they worked, and whether they did it often. Then they grunted, and the envy in their eyes was a delight to me. I dared not, however, mock them too pointedly, lest Necessity should drag me back by the collar to take my still warm place by their side. When I had disgusted all who knew me, I fled to Calcutta, which, I was pained to see, still persisted in being a city and transacting commerce after I had formally cursed it one year ago. That curse I now repeat, in the hope that the unsavoury capital will collapse. One must begin to smoke at five in the morning—which

is neither night nor day—on coming across the Howrah Bridge, for it is better to get a headache from honest nicotine than to be poisoned by evil smells. And a man, who otherwise was a nice man, though he worked with his hands and his head, asked me why the scandal of the Simla Exodus was allowed to continue. To him I made answer: "It is because this sewer is unfit for human habitation. It is because you are all one gigantic mistake,—you and your monuments and your merchants and everything about you. I rejoice to think that scores of lakhs of rupees have been spent on public offices at a place called Simla, that scores and scores will be spent on the Delhi–Kalka line, in order that civilised people may go there in comfort. When that line is opened, your big city will be dead and buried and done with, and I hope it will teach you a lesson. Your city will rot, Sir." And he said: "When people are buried here, they turn into adipocere in five days if the weather is rainy. They saponify, you know." I said: "Go and saponify, for I hate Calcutta." But he took me to the Eden Gardens instead, and begged me for my own sake not to go round the world in this prejudiced spirit. I was unhappy and ill, but he vowed that my spleen was due to my "Simla way of looking at things."

All this world of ours knows something about the Eden Gardens, which are supposed by the uninitiated of the mofussil to represent the gilded luxury of the metropolis. As a matter of fact they are hideously dull. The inhabitants appear in top–hats and frock–coats, and walk dolorously to and fro under the glare of jerking electric lamps, when they ought to be sitting in their shirt–sleeves round little tables and treating their wives to iced lager beer. My friend—it was a muggy March night—wrapped himself in the prescribed garments and said graciously: "You can wear a round hat, but you mustn't wear deck–shoes; and for goodness' sake, my dear fellow, don't smoke on the Red Road—all the people one knows go there." Most of the people who were people sat in their carriages, in an atmosphere of hot horse, harness, and panel–lacquer, outside the gardens, and the remnant tramped up and down, by twos and threes, upon squashy green grass, until they were wearied, while a band played at them. "And is this all you do?" I asked. "It is," said my friend. "Isn't it good enough? We meet every one we know here, and walk with him or her, unless he or she is among the carriages."

Overhead was a woolly warm sky; underfoot feverish soft grass; and from all quarters the languorous breeze bore faint reminiscences of stale sewage upon its wings. Round the horizon were stacked lines of carriages, and the electric flare bred aches in the strained eyebrow. It was a strange sight and fascinating. The doomed creatures walked up and down without cessation, for when one fled away into the lamp–spangled gloom twenty came to take his place. Slop–hatted

members of the mercantile marine, Armenian merchants, Bengal civilians, shop–girls and shop–men, Jews, Parthians, and Mesopotamians, were all there in the tepid heat and the fetid smell.

"This," said my friend, "is how we enjoy ourselves. There are the Viceregal liveries. Lady Lansdowne comes here." He spoke as though reading to me the Government House list of Paradise. I reflected that these people would continue to walk up and down until they died, drinkless, dusty, sad, and blanched.

In saying this last thing I had made a mistake. Calcutta is no more Anglo–Indian than West Brompton. In common with Bombay, it has achieved a mental attitude several decades in advance of that of the raw and brutal India of fact. An intelligent and responsible financier, discussing the Empire, said: "But why do we want so large an army in India? Look at the country all about." I think he meant as far as the Circular Road or perhaps Raneegunge. Some of these days, when the voice of the two uncomprehending cities carries to London, and its advice is acted upon, there will be trouble. Till this second journey to Calcutta I was unable to account for the acid tone and limited range of the Presidency journals. I see now that they are ward papers and ought to be treated as such.

In the fulness of time—there was no hurry—imagine that, O you toilers of the land—I took ship and fled from Calcutta by that which they call the Mutton–Mail, because it takes sheep and correspondence to Rangoon. Half the Punjab was going with us to serve the Queen in the Burma Military Police, and it was grateful to catch once more the raw, rasping up–country speech amid the jabber of Burmese and Bengali.

To Rangoon, then, aboard the *Madura*, come with me down the Hughli, and try to understand what sort of life is led by the pilots, those strange men who only seem to know the land by watching it from the river.

"And I fetched up under the north ridge with six inches o' water under me, with a sou'west monsoon blowing, an' me not knowing any more than the dead where in—Paradise—I was taking her," says one deep voice.

"Well, what do you expect?" says another. "They ought not all to be occulting lights. Give me a red with two flashes for outlying danger anyhow. The Hughli's the worst river in the world. Why, off the Lower Gasper only last year…."

"And look at the way Government treats you!"

The Hughli pilot is human. He may talk Greek in the exercise of his profession, but he can unite at swearing at the Government as thoroughly as though he were an uncovenanted civilian. His life is a hard one; but he is full of strange stories, and when treated with

proper respect may condescend to tell some of them. If he has served on the river for six years as a "cub," and is neither dead nor decrepit, I believe he can earn as much as fifty rupees by sending two thousand tons of ship and a few hundred souls flying down the reaches at twelve miles an hour. Then he drops over the side with your last love–letters and wanders about the estuary in a tug until he finds another steamer and brings her up. It does not take much to comfort him.

* * * * *

Somewhere in the open sea some days later. I give it up. I *cannot* write, and to sleep I am not ashamed. A glorious idleness has taken entire possession of me; journalism is an imposture; so is Literature; so is Art. All India dropped out of sight yesterday and the rocking pilot–brig at the Sandheads bore my last message to the prison that I quit. We have reached blue water—crushed sapphire—and a little breeze is bellying the awning. Three flying–fish were sighted this morning; the tea at *chota–hazri* is not nice, but the captain is excellent. Is this budget of news sufficiently exciting, or must I in strict confidence tell you the story of the Professor and the compass? You will hear more about the Professor later, if, indeed, I ever touch pen again. When he was in India he worked about nine hours a day. At noon to–day he conceived an interest in cyclones and things of that kind—would go to his cabin to get a compass and a meteorological book. He went, but stopped to reflect by the brink of a drink. "The compass is in a box," said he, drowsily, "but the nuisance of it is that to get it I shall have to pull the box out from under my berth. All things considered, I don't think it's worth while." He loafed on deck, and I think by this time is fast asleep. There was no trace of shame in his voice for his mighty sloth. I would have reproved him, but the words died on my tongue. I was guiltier than he.

"Professor," said I, "there is a foolish little paper in Allahabad called the *Pioneer*. I am supposed to be writing it a letter—a letter with my hands! Did you ever hear of anything so absurd?"

"I wonder if Angostura bitters really go with whisky," said the Professor, toying with the neck of the bottle.

There is no such place as India; there never was a daily paper called the *Pioneer*. It was all a weary dream. The only real things in the world are crystal seas, clean–swept decks, soft rugs, warm sunshine, the smell of salt in the air, and fathomless, futile indolence.

No. II

The River of the Lost Footsteps and the Golden Mystery Upon Its Banks. the Iniquity of Jordan. Shows How a Man May Go to the Shway Dagon Pagoda and See It Not and to the Pegu Club and Hear Too Much. a Dissertation on Mixed Drinks - "I Am a Part of All That I Have Met, Yet All Experience is an Arch Where Through Gleams That Untravelled World Whose Margin Fades for Ever and for Ever When I Move."

There was a river and a bar, a pilot and a great deal of nautical mystery, and the Captain said the journey from Calcutta was ended and that we should be in Rangoon in a few hours. It is not an impressive stream, being low–banked, scrubby, and muddy; but as we gave the staggering rice–boats the go–by, I reflected that I was looking upon the River of the Lost Footsteps—the road that so many, many men of my acquaintance had travelled, never to return, within the past three years. Such a one had gone up to open out Upper Burma, and had himself been opened out by a Burmese dah in the cruel scrub beyond Minhla; such another had gone to rule the land in the Queen's name, but could not rule a hill stream and was carried down under his horse. One had been shot by his servant; another by a dacoit while he sat at dinner; and a pitifully long list had found in jungle–fever their sole reward for "the difficulties and privations inseparably connected with military service," as the Bengal Army Regulations put it. I ran over half a score of names—policemen, subalterns, young civilians, employés of big trading firms, and adventurers. They had gone up the river and they had died. At my elbow stood one of the workers in New Burma, going to report himself at Rangoon, and he told tales of interminable chases after evasive dacoits, of marchings and counter–marchings that came to nothing, and of deaths in the wilderness as noble as they were sad.

Then, a golden mystery upheaved itself on the horizon—a beautiful winking wonder that blazed in the sun, of a shape that was neither Muslim dome nor Hindu temple spire. It stood upon a green knoll, and below it were lines of warehouses, sheds, and mills. Under what new god, thought I, are we irrepressible English sitting now?

"There's the old Shway Dagon" (pronounced Dagone, *not* like the god in the Scriptures), said my companion. "Confound it!" But it was not a thing to be sworn at. It explained in the first place why we took Rangoon, and in the second why we pushed on to see what more of rich or rare the land held. Up till that sight my uninstructed eyes could not see that the land differed much in appearance from the Sunderbuns, but the golden dome said: "This is Burma, and it will be

quite unlike any land you know about." "It's a famous old shrine o' sorts," said my companion, "and now the Tounghoo–Mandalay line is open, pilgrims are flocking down by the thousand to see it. It lost its big gold top—'thing that they call a *'htee*—in an earthquake: that's why it's all hidden by bamboo–work for a third of its height. You should see it when it's all uncovered. They're regilding it now."

Why is it that when one views for the first time any of the wonders of the earth a bystander always strikes in with, "You should see it, etc."? Such men given twenty minutes from the tomb at the Day of Judgment, would patronize the naked souls as they hurried up with the glare of Tophet on their faces, and say: "You should have seen this when Gabriel first began to blow." What the Shway Dagon really is and how many books may have been written upon its history and archæology is no part of my business. As it stood overlooking everything it seemed to explain all about Burma—why the boys had gone north and died, why the troopers bustled to and fro, and why the steamers of the Irrawaddy Flotilla lay like black–backed gulls upon the water.

Then we came to a new land, and the first thing that one of the regular residents said was: "This place isn't India at all. They ought to have made it a Crown colony." Judging the Empire as it ought to be judged, by its most prominent points—*videlicet*, its smells—he was right; for though there is one stink in Calcutta, another in Bombay, and a third and most pungent one in the Punjab, yet they have a kinship of stinks, whereas Burma smells quite otherwise. It is not exactly what China ought to smell like, but it is not India. "What is it?" I asked; and the man said "*Napi*," which is fish pickled when it ought to have been buried long ago. This food, in guide–book language, is inordinately consumed by …but everybody who has been within downwind range of Rangoon knows what *napi* means, and those who do not will not understand.

Yes, it was a very new land—a land where the people understood colour—a delightfully lazy land full of pretty girls and very bad cheroots.

The worst of it was that the Anglo–Indian was a foreigner, a creature of no account. He did not know Burman,—which was no great loss,—and the Madrassi insisted upon addressing him in English. The Madrassi, by the way, is a great institution. He takes the place of the Burman, who will not work, and in a few years returns to his native coast with rings on his fingers and bells on his toes. The consequences are obvious. The Madrassi demands, and receives, enormous wages, and gets to know that he is indispensable. The Burman exists beautifully, while his women–folk marry the Madrassi and the Chinaman, because these support them in affluence. When the

Burman wishes to work he gets a Madrassi to do it for him. How he finds the money to pay the Madrassi I was not informed, but all men were agreed in saying that under no circumstances will the Burman exert himself in the paths of honest industry. Now, if a bountiful Providence had clothed you in a purple, green, amber or puce petticoat, had thrown a rose–pink scarf–turban over your head, and had put you in a pleasant damp country where rice grew of itself and fish came up to be caught, putrified and pickled, would *you* work? Would you not rather take a cheroot and loaf about the streets seeing what was to be seen? If two–thirds of your girls were grinning, good–humoured little maidens and the remainder positively pretty, would you not spend your time in making love?

The Burman does both these things, and the Englishman, who after all worked himself to Burma, says hard things about him. Personally I love the Burman with the blind favouritism born of first impression. When I die I will be a Burman, with twenty yards of real King's silk, that has been made in Mandalay, about my body, and a succession of cigarettes between my lips. I will wave the cigarette to emphasise my conversation, which shall be full of jest and repartee, and I will always walk about with a pretty almond–coloured girl who shall laugh and jest too, as a young maiden ought. She shall not pull a sari over her head when a man looks at her and glare suggestively from behind it, nor shall she tramp behind me when I walk: for these are the customs of India. She shall look all the world between the eyes, in honesty and good fellowship, and I will teach her not to defile her pretty mouth with chopped tobacco in a cabbage leaf, but to inhale good cigarettes of Egypt's best brand.

Seriously, the Burmese girls are very pretty, and when I saw them I understood much that I had heard about—about our army in Flanders let us say.

Providence really helps those who do not help themselves. I went up a street, name unknown, attracted by the colour that was so wantonly flashed down its length. There is colour in Rajputana and in Southern India, and you can find a whole paletteful of raw tints at any down–country durbar; but the Burmese way of colouring is different. With the women the scarf, petticoat, and jacket are of three lively hues, and with the men putso and head–wrap are gorgeous. Thus you get your colours dashed down in dots against a background of dark timber houses set in green foliage. There are no canons of art anywhere, and every scheme of colouring depends on the power of the sun above. That is why men in a London fog do still believe in pale greens and sad reds. Give me lilac, pink, vermilion, lapis lazuli, and blistering blood red under fierce sunlight that mellows and modifies all. I had just made this discovery and was noting that the people

treated their cattle kindly, when the driver of an absurd little hired carriage built to the scale of a fat Burma pony, volunteered to take me for a drive, and we drove in the direction of the English quarter of the town where the sahibs live in dainty little houses made out of the sides of cigar boxes. They looked as if they could be kicked in at a blow and (trust a Globe–trotter for evolving a theory at a minute's notice) it is to avoid this fate that they are built for the most part on legs. The houses are not cantonment bred in any way—nor did the uneven ground and dusty reddish roads fit in with any part of the Indian Empire except it may be Ootacamund.

The pony wandered into a garden studded with lovely little lakes which, again, were studded with islands, and there were sahibs in flannels in the boats. Outside the park were pleasant little monasteries full of clean–shaved gentlemen in gold amber robes learning to renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil by chatting furiously amongst themselves, and at every corner stood the three little maids from school, almost exactly as they had been dismissed from the side scenes of the Savoy after the *Mikado* was over: and the strange part of it all was that every one laughed—laughed, so it seemed, at the sky above them because it was blue, at the sun because it was sinking, and at each other because they had nothing better to do. A small fat child laughed loudest of all, in spite of the fact that it was smoking a cheroot that ought to have made it deathly sick. The pagoda was always close at hand—as brilliant a mystery as when first sighted far down the river; but it changed its shape as we came nearer, and showed in the middle of a nest of hundreds of smaller pagodas. There appeared suddenly two colossal tigers (after the Burmese canons) in plaster on a hillside, and they were the guardians of Burma's greatest pagoda. Round them rustled a great crowd of happy people in pretty dresses, and the feet of all were turned towards a great stoneway that ran from between the tigers even to the brow of the mound. But the nature of the stairs was peculiar. They were covered in for the most part by a tunnel, or it may have been a walled–in colonnade, for there were heavily gilt wooden pillars visible in the gloom. The afternoon was drawing on as I came to this strange place and saw that I should have to climb up a long, low hill of stairs to get to the pagoda.

Once or twice in my life I have seen a Globe–trotter literally gasping with jealous emotion because India was so much larger and more lovely than he had ever dreamed, and because he had only set aside three months to explore it in. My own sojourn in Rangoon was countable by hours, so I may be forgiven when I pranced with impatience at the bottom of the staircase because I could not at once secure a full, complete, and accurate idea of everything that was to be seen. The meaning of the guardian tigers, the inwardness of the main

pagoda, and the countless little ones, was hidden from me. I could not understand why the pretty girls with cheroots sold little sticks and coloured candles to be used before the image of Buddha. Everything was incomprehensible to me, and there was none to explain. All that I could gather was that in a few days the great golden *'htee* that has been defaced by the earthquake would be hoisted into position with feasting and song, and that half Upper Burma was coming down to see the show.

I went forward between the two great beasts, across a whitewashed court, till I came to a flat–headed arch guarded by the lame, the blind, the leper, and the deformed. These plucked at my clothes as I passed, and moaned and whined: but the stream that disappeared up the gentle slope of the stairway took no notice of them. And I stepped into the semi–darkness of a long, long corridor flanked by booths, and floored with stones worn very smooth by human feet.

At the far end of the roofed corridor there was a breadth of evening sky, and at this point rose a second and much steeper flight of stairs, leading directly to the Shwedagon (this, by the way, is its real spelling). Down this staircase fell, from gloom to deeper gloom, a cascade of colour. At this point I stayed, because there was a beautiful archway of Burmese build, and adorned with a Chinese inscription, directly in front of me, and I conceived foolishly that I should find nothing more pleasant to look at if I went farther. Also, I wished to understand how such a people could produce the dacoit of the newspaper, and I knew that a great deal of promiscuous knowledge comes to him who sits down by the wayside. Then I saw a Face—which explained a good deal. The chin, jowl, lips, and neck were modelled faithfully on the lines of the worst of the Roman Empresses —the lolloping, walloping women that Swinburne sings about, and that we sometimes see pictures of. Above this gross perfection of form came the Mongoloid nose, narrow forehead, and flaring pig's eyes. I stared intently, and the man stared back again, with admirable insolence, that puckered one corner of his mouth. Then he swaggered forward, and I was richer by a new face and a little knowledge. "I must make further inquiries at the Club," said I, "but that man seems to be of the proper dacoit type. He could crucify on occasion."

Then a brown baby came by in its mother's arms and laughed, wherefore I much desired to shake hands with it, and grinned to that effect. The mother held out the tiny soft pud and laughed, and the baby laughed, and we all laughed together, because that seemed to be the custom of the country, and returned down the now dark corridor where the lamps of the stall–keepers were twinkling and scores of people were helping us to laugh. They must be a mild–mannered

nation, the Burmese, for they leave little three–year–olds in charge of a whole wilderness of clay dolls or a menagerie of jointed tigers.

I had not actually entered the Shwedagon, but I felt just as happy as though I had.

In the Pegu Club I found a friend—a Punjabi—upon whose broad bosom I threw myself and demanded food and entertainment. He had not long since received a visit from the Commissioner of Peshawar, of all places in the world, and was not to be upset by sudden arrivals. But he had come down in the world hideously. Years ago in the Black North he used to speak the vernacular as it should be spoken, and was one of us.

"*Daniel, how many socks master got?*"

The unfinished peg fell from my fist. "Good Heavens!" said I, "is it possible that you—you—speak that disgusting pidgin–talk to your *nauker*? It's enough to make one cry. You're no better than a Bombaywallah."

"I'm a Madrassi," said he, calmly. "We all talk English to our boys here. Isn't it beautiful? Now come along to the Gymkhana and then we'll dine here. Daniel, master's hat and stick get."

There must be a few hundred men who are fairly behind the scenes of the Burma War—one of the least known and appreciated of any of our little affairs. The Pegu Club seemed to be full of men on their way up or down, and the conversation was but an echo of the murmur of conquest far away to the north.

"See that man over there. He was cut over the head the other day at Zoungloung–goo. Awfully tough man. That chap next him has been on the dacoit–hunt for about a year. He broke up Boh Mango's gang: caught the Boh in a paddy field, y'know. The other man's going home on sick leave—got a lump of iron somewhere in his system. Try our mutton; I assure you the Club is the only place in Rangoon where you get mutton. Look here, you must *not* speak vernacular to our boys. Hi, boy! get master some more ice. They're all Bombay men or Madrassis. Up at the front there are some Burman servants: but a real Burman will never work. He prefers being a simple little *daku*."

"How much?"

"Dear little dacoit. We call 'em *dakus* for short—sort o' pet name. That's the butter–fish. I forgot you didn't get much fish up–country. Yes, I s'pose Rangoon has its advantages. You pay like a Prince. Take an ordinary married establishment. Little furnished house—one hundred and fifty rupees. Servants' wages two twenty or two fifty. That's four hundred at once. My dear fellow, a sweeper won't take less than twelve or sixteen rupees a month here, and even then he'll work for other houses. It's worse than Quetta. Any man who comes to Lower Burma in the hope of living on his pay is a fool."

Voice from lower end of table. "Dee fool. It's different in Upper Burma, where you get command and travelling allowances."

Another voice in the middle of a conversation. "They never got that story into the papers, but I can tell you we weren't quite as quick in rushing the fort as they made believe. You see Boh Gwee had us in a regular trap, and by the time we had closed the line our men were being peppered front and rear: that jungle–fighting is the deuce and all. More ice please."

Then they told me of the death of an old school–fellow under the ramp of the Minhla redoubt—does any one remember the affair at Minhla that opened the third Burmese ball?

"I was close to him," said a voice. "He died in A.'s arms, I fancy, but I'm not quite sure. Anyhow, I know he died easily. He was a good fellow."

"Thank you," said I, "and now I think I'll go;" and I went out into the steamy night, my head ringing with stories of battle, murder, and sudden death. I had reached the fringe of the veil that hides Upper Burma, and I would have given much to have gone up the river and seen a score of old friends, now jungle–worn men of war. All that night I dreamed of interminable staircases down which swept thousands of pretty girls, so brilliantly robed that my eyes ached at the sight. There was a great golden bell at the top of the stairs, and at the bottom, his face turned to the sky, lay poor old D—dead at Minhla, and a host of unshaven ragamuffins in khaki were keeping guard over him.

No. III

The City of Elephants Which is Governed by the Great God of Idleness, Who Lives on the Top of a Hill. the History of Three Great Discoveries and the Naughty Children of Iquique - "I Built My Soul a Lordly Pleasure-house Wherein at Ease for Aye to Dwell, I Said: Oh, Soul, Make Merry and Carouse, Dear Soul, for All is Well."

So much for making definite programmes of travel beforehand. In my first letter I told you that I would go from Rangoon to Penang direct. Now we are lying off Moulmein in a new steamer which does not seem to run anywhere in particular. Why she should go to Moulmein is a mystery; but as every soul on the ship is a loafer like myself, no one is discontented. Imagine a shipload of people to whom time is no object, who have no desires beyond three meals a day and no emotions save those caused by a casual cockroach.

Moulmein is situated up the mouth of a river which ought to flow through South America, and all manner of dissolute native craft appear to make the place their home. Ugly cargo–steamers that the initiated call "Geordie tramps" grunt and bellow at the beautiful hills all round, and the pot–bellied British India liners wallow down the reaches. Visitors are rare in Moulmein—so rare that few but cargo–boats think it worth their while to come off from the shore.

Strictly in confidence I will tell you that Moulmein is not a city of this earth at all. Sindbad the Sailor visited it, if you recollect, on that memorable voyage when he discovered the burial–ground of the elephants.

As the steamer came up the river we were aware of first one elephant and then another hard at work in timber–yards that faced the shore. A few narrow–minded folk with binoculars said that there were *mahouts* upon their backs, but this was never clearly proven. I prefer to believe in what I saw—a sleepy town, just one house thick, scattered along a lovely stream and inhabited by slow, solemn elephants, building stockades for their own diversion. There was a strong scent of freshly sawn teak in the air—we could not see any elephants sawing—and occasionally the warm stillness was broken by the crash of the log. When the elephants had got an appetite for luncheon they loafed off in couples to their club, and did not take the trouble to give us greeting and the latest mail papers; at which we were much disappointed, but took heart when we saw upon a hill a large white pagoda surrounded by scores of little pagodas. "This," we said with one voice, "is the place to make an excursion to," and then shuddered at our own profanity, for above all things we did not wish to behave like mere vulgar tourists.

The *ticca–gharies* at Moulmein are three sizes smaller than those of Rangoon, as the ponies are no bigger than decent sheep. Their drivers trot them uphill and down, and as the *ghari* is extremely narrow and the roads are anything but good, the exercise is refreshing. Here again all the drivers are Madrassis.

I should better remember what that pagoda was like had I not fallen deeply and irrevocably in love with a Burmese girl at the foot of the first flight of steps. Only the fact of the steamer starting next noon prevented me from staying at Moulmein forever and owning a pair of elephants. These are so common that they wander about the streets, and, I make no doubt, could be obtained for a piece of sugar–cane.

Leaving this far too lovely maiden, I went up the steps only a few yards, and, turning me round, looked upon a view of water, island, broad river, fair grazing ground, and belted wood that made me rejoice that I was alive. The hillside below me and above me was ablaze with pagodas—from a gorgeous golden and vermilion beauty to a delicate grey stone one just completed in honour of an eminent priest lately deceased at Mandalay. Far above my head there was a faint tinkle, as of golden bells, and a talking of the breezes in the tops of the toddy–palms. Wherefore I climbed higher and higher up the steps till I reached a place of great peace, dotted with Burmese images, spotlessly clean. Here women now and again paid reverence. They bowed their heads and their lips moved, because they were praying. I had an umbrella—a black one—in my hand, deck–shoes upon my feet, and a helmet upon my head. I did not pray—I swore at myself for being a Globe–trotter, and wished that I had enough Burmese to explain to these ladies that I was sorry and would have taken off my hat but for the sun. A Globe–trotter is a brute. I had the grace to blush as I tramped round the pagoda. That will be remembered to me for righteousness. But I stared horribly—at a gold and red side–temple with a beautifully gilt image of Buddha in it—at the grim figures in the niches at the base of the main pagoda—at the little palms that grew out of the cracks in the tiled paving of the court —at the big palms above, and at the low hung bronze bells that stood at each corner for the women to smite with stag–horns. Upon one bell rang this amazing triplet in English, evidently the composition of the caster, who completed his work—and now, let us hope, has reached Nibban—thirty–five years ago:—

> "He who destroyed this Bell
> They must be in the great Hel
> And unable to coming out."

I respect a man who is not able to spell Hell properly. It shows

that he has been brought up in an amiable creed. You who come to Moulmein treat this bell with respect, and refrain from playing with it, for that hurts the feelings of the worshippers.

In the base of the pagoda were four rooms, lined as to three sides with colossal plaster figures, before each of whom burned one solitary dip whose rays fought with the flood of evening sunshine that came through the windows, and the room was filled with a pale yellow light —unearthly to stand in. Occasionally a woman crept in to one of these rooms to pray, but nearly all the company stayed in the courtyard; but those that faced the figures prayed more zealously than the others, so I judged that their troubles were the greater. Of the actual cult I knew less than nothing; for the neatly bound English books that we read make no mention of pointing red–tipped straws at a golden image, or of the banging of bells after the custom of worshippers in a Hindu temple. It must be a genial one, however. To begin with, it is quiet and carried on among the fairest possible surroundings that ever landscape offered.

In this particular case, the massive white pagoda shot into the blue from the west of a walled hill that commanded four separate and desirable views as you looked either at the steamer in the river below, the polished silver reaches to the left, the woods to the right, or the roofs of Moulmein to the landward. Between each pause of the rustling of dresses and the low–toned talk of the women fell, from far above, the tinkle of innumerable metal leaves which were stirred by the breeze as they hung from the *'htee* of the pagoda. A golden image winked in the sun; the painted ones stared straight in front of them over the heads of the worshippers, and somewhere below a mallet and a plane were lazily helping to build yet another pagoda in honour of the Lord of the Earth.

Sitting in meditation while the Professor went round with a sacrilegious camera, to the vast terror of the Burmese youth, I made two notable discoveries and nearly went to sleep over them. The first was that the Lord of the Earth is Idleness—thick slab idleness with a little religion stirred in to keep it sweet, and the second was that the shape of the pagoda came originally from a bulging toddy–palm trunk. There was one between me and the far–off sky line, and it exactly duplicated the outlines of a small grey stone building.

Yet a third discovery, and a much more important one, came to me later on. A dirty little imp of a boy ran by clothed more or less in a beautifully worked silk putso, the like of which I had in vain attempted to secure at Rangoon. A bystander told me that such an article would cost one hundred and ten rupees—exactly ten rupees in excess of the price demanded at Rangoon, when I had been discourteous to a pretty Burmese girl with diamonds in her ears, and

had treated her as though she were a Delhi boxwallah.

"Professor," said I, when the camera spidered round the corner, "there is something wrong with this people. They won't work, they aren't all dacoits, and their babies run about with hundred–rupees putsoes on them, while their parents speak the truth. How in the world do they get a living?"

"They exist beautifully," said the Professor; "and I only brought half a dozen plates with me. I shall come again in the morning with some more. Did I ever dream of a place like this?"

"No," said I. "It's perfect, and for the life of me I can't quite see where the precise charm lies."

"In its Beastly Laziness," said the Professor, as he packed the camera, and we went away, regretfully, haunted by the voices of many wind–blown bells.

Not ten minutes from the pagoda we saw a real British bandstand, a shanty labelled "Municipal Office," a collection of P. W. D. bungalows that in vain strove to blast the landscape, and a Madras band. I had never seen Madrassi troops before. They seem to dress just like Tommies, and have an air of much culture and refinement. It is said that they read English books and know all about their rights and privileges. For further details apply to the Pegu Club, second table from the top on the right hand side as you enter.

In an evil hour I attempted to revive the drooping trade of Moulmein, and to this end bound a native of the place to come on board the steamer next morn with a collection of Burmese silks. It was only a five minutes' pull, and he could have sat in the stern all the while. Morning came, but not the man. Not a boat of watermelons, pink fleshy watermelons, neared the ship. We might have been in quarantine. As we slipped down the river on our way to Penang, I saw the elephants playing with the teak logs as solemnly and as mysteriously as ever. They were the chief inhabitants, and, for aught I know, the rulers of the place. Their lethargy had corrupted the town, and when the Professor wished to photograph them, I believe they went away in scorn.

We are now running down to Penang with the thermometer 87° in the cabins, and anything you please on deck. We have exhausted all our literature, drunk two hundred lemon squashes; played forty different games of cards (Patience mostly), organised a lottery on the run (had it been a thousand rupees instead of ten I should not have won it), and slept seventeen hours out of the twenty–four. It is perfectly impossible to write, but you may be morally the better for the story of the Bad People of Iquique which, "as you have not before heard, I will now proceed to relate." It has just been told me by a German orchid–hunter, fresh from nearly losing his head in the Lushai

hills, who has been over most of the world.

Iquique is somewhere in South America—at the back of or beyond Brazil—and once upon a time there came to it a tribe of Aborigines from out of the woods, so innocent that they wore nothing at all—absolutely nothing at all. They had a grievance, but no garments, and the former they came to lay before His Excellency, the Governor of Iquique. But the news of their coming and their exceeding nakedness had gone before them, and good Spanish ladies of the town agreed that the heathen should first of all be clothed. So they organised a sewing–bee, and the result, which was mainly aprons, was served out to the Bad People with hints as to its use. Nothing could have been better. They appeared in their aprons before the Governor and all the ladies of Iquique, ranged on the steps of the cathedral, only to find that the Governor could not grant their demands. And do you know what these children of nature did? In the twinkling of an eye they had off those aprons, slung them round their necks, and were dancing naked as the dawn before the scandalised ladies of Iquique, who fled with their fans before their eyes into the sanctuary of the cathedral. And when the steps were deserted the Bad People withdrew, shouting and leaping, their aprons still round their necks, for good cloth is valuable property. They encamped near the town, knowing their own power. 'Twas impossible to send the military against them, and equally impossible that Donnas and Señoritas should be exposed to the chance of being shocked whenever they went abroad. No one knew at what hour the Bad People would sweep through the streets. Their demands were therefore granted and Iquique had rest. Nuda est Veritas et prevalebit.

"But," said I, "what is there so awful in a naked Indian—or two hundred naked Indians for that matter?"

"My friend," said the German, "dey vas Indians of Sout' America. I dell you dey do not demselves shtrip vell."

I put my hand on my mouth and went away.

No. IV

Showing How I Came to Palmiste Island and the Place of Paul and Virginia, and Fell Asleep in a Garden. a Disquisition on the Folly of Sight-seeing - "Some for the Glories of This World and Some Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to Come. Ah, Take the Cash and Let the Credit Go, Nor Heed the Rumble of a Distant Drum."

There is something very wrong in the Anglo–Saxon character. Hardly had the *Africa* dropped anchor in Penang Straits when two of our fellow–passengers were smitten with madness because they heard that another steamer was even then starting for Singapur. If they went by it they would gain several days. Heaven knows why time should have been so precious to them. The news sent them flying into their cabins, and packing their trunks as though their salvation depended upon it. Then they tumbled over the side and were rowed away in a sampan, hot, but happy. They were on a pleasure–trip, and they had gained perhaps three days. That was their pleasure.

Do you recollect Besant's description of Palmiste Island in *My Little Girl* and *So They Were Married*? Penang is Palmiste Island. I found this out from the ship, looking at the wooded hills that dominate the town, and at the regiments of palm trees three miles away that marked the coast of Wellesley Province. The air was soft and heavy with laziness, and at the ship's side were boat–loads of much jewelled Madrassis—even those to whom Besant has alluded. A squall swept across the water and blotted out the rows of low, red–tiled houses that made up Penang, and the shadows of night followed the storm.

I put my twelve–inch rule in my pocket to measure all the world by, and nearly wept with emotion when on landing at the jetty I fell against a Sikh—a beautiful bearded Sikh, with white leggings and a rifle. As is cold water in a thirsty land so is a face from the old country. My friend had come from Jandiala in the Umritsar district. Did I know Jandiala? Did I not? I began to tell all the news I could recollect about crops and armies and the movements of big men in the far, far north while the Sikh beamed. He belonged to the military police, and it was a good service, but of course it was far from the old country. There was no hard work, and the Chinamen gave but little trouble. They had fights among themselves, but "they do not care to give *us* any impudence;" and the big man swaggered off with the long roll and swing of a whole Pioneer regiment, while I cheered myself with the thought that India—the India I pretend to hold in hatred—was not so far off, after all.

You know our ineradicable tendency to damn everything in the

mofussil. Calcutta professes astonishment that Allahabad has a good dancing floor; Allahabad wonders if it is true that Lahore really has an ice–factory; and Lahore pretends to believe that everybody in Peshawar sleeps armed. Very much in the same way I was amused at seeing a steam tramway in Rangoon, and after we had quitted Moulmein fully expected to find the outskirts of civilisation. Vanity and ignorance were severely shocked when they confronted a long street of business—a street of two–storied houses, full of *ticca–gharies*, shop signs, and above all *jinrickshaws*.

You in India have never seen a proper *'rickshaw*. There are about two thousand of them in Penang, and no two seem alike. They are lacquered with bold figures of dragons and horses and birds and butterflies: their shafts are of black wood bound with white metal, and so strong that the coolie sits upon them when he waits for his fare. There is only one coolie, but he is strong, and he runs just as well as six bell–men. He ties up his pigtail,—being a Cantonese,—and this is a disadvantage to sahibs who cannot speak Tamil, Malay, or Cantonese. Otherwise he might be steered like a camel.

The *'rickshaw* men are patient and long–suffering. The evil–visaged person who drove my carriage lashed at them when they came within whip range, and did his best to drive over them as he headed for the Waterfalls, which are five miles away from Penang Town. I expected that the buildings should stop, choked out among the dense growth of cocoanut. But they continued for many streets, very like Park and Middleton streets in Calcutta, where shuttered houses, which were half–bred between an Indian bungalow and a Rangoon rabbit–hutch, fought with the greenery and crotons as big as small trees. Now and again there blazed the front of a Chinese house, all open–work vermilion, lamp–black, and gold, with six–foot Chinese lanterns over the doorways and glimpses of quaintly cut shrubs in the well–kept gardens beyond.

We struck into roads fringed with native houses on piles, shadowed by the everlasting cocoanut palms heavy with young nuts. The heat was heavy with the smell of vegetation, and it was not the smell of the earth after the rains. Some bird–thing called out from the deeps of the foliage, and there was a mutter of thunder in the hills which we were approaching: but all the rest was very still—and the sweat ran down our faces in drops.

"Now you've got to walk up that hill," said the driver, pointing to a small barrier outside a well–kept botanical garden; "all the carriages stop here." One's limbs moved as though leaden, and the breath came heavily, drawing in each time the vapour of a Turkish bath. The soil was alive with wet and warmth, and the unknown trees—I was too sleepy to read the labels that some offensively energetic man has

written—were wet and warm too. Up on the hillside the voice of the water was saying something, but I was too sleepy to listen; and on the top of the hill lay a fat cloud just like an eider–down quilt tucking everything in safely.

"And in the afternoon they came unto a land
In which it seemed always afternoon."

I sat down where I was, for I saw that the upward path was very steep and was cut into rude steps, and an exposition of sleep had come upon me. I was at the mouth of a tiny gorge, exactly where the lotus–eaters had sat down when they began their song, for I recognised the Waterfall and the air round my ears "breathing as one that has a weary dream."

I looked and beheld that I could not give in words the genius of the place. "I can't play the flute, but I have a cousin who plays the violin." I knew a man who could. Some people said he was not a nice man, and I might run the risk of contaminating morals, but nothing mattered in such a climate. See now, go to the very worst of Zola's novels and read there his description of a conservatory. That was it. Several months passed away, but there was neither chill nor burning heat to mark the passage of time. Only, with a sense of acute pain I felt that I must "do" the Waterfall, and I climbed up the steps in the hillside, though every boulder cried "sit down," until I found a small stream of water coursing down the face of a rock, and a much bigger one down my own.

Then we went away to breakfast, the stomach being always more worthy than any amount of sentiment. A turn in the road hid the gardens and stopped the noise of the waters, and that experience was over for all time. Experiences are very like cheroots. They generally begin badly, taste perfect half way through, and at the butt–end are things to be thrown away and never picked up again….

His name was John, and he had a pigtail five feet long—all real hair and no silk braided, and he kept an hotel by the way and fed us with a chicken, into whose innocent flesh onions and strange vegetables had been forced. Till then we had feared Chinamen, especially when they brought food, but now we will eat anything at their hands. The conclusion of the meal was a half–guinea pineapple and a siesta. This is a beautiful thing which we of India—but I am of India no more—do not understand. You lie down and wait for time to pass. You are not in the least wearied—and you would not go to sleep. You are filled with a divine drowsiness—quite different from the heavy sodden slumber of a hot–weather Sunday, or the businesslike repose of a Europe morning. Now I begin to despise novelists who write about *siestas* in cold climates. I know what the real thing means.

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I have been trying to buy a few things—a *sarong*, which is a *putso* which is a *dhoti*; a pipe; and a "damned Malayan kris." The *sarongs* come chiefly from Germany, the pipes from the pawn–shops, and there are no krises except little toothpick things that could not penetrate the hide of a Malay. In the native town, I found a large army of Chinese—more than I imagined existed in China itself—encamped in spacious streets and houses, some of them sending block–tin to Singapur, some driving fine carriages, others making shoes, chairs, clothes, and every other thing that a large town desires. They were the first army corps on the march of the Mongol. The scouts are at Calcutta, and a flying column at Rangoon. Here begins the main body, some hundred thousand strong, so they say. Was it not De Quincey that had a horror of the Chinese—of their inhumaneness and their inscrutability? Certainly the people in Penang are not nice; they are even terrible to behold. They work hard, which in this climate is manifestly wicked, and their eyes are just like the eyes of their own pet dragons. Our Hindu gods are passable, some of them even jolly—witness our pot–bellied Ganesh; but what can you do with a people who revel in D. T. monsters and crown their roof–ridges with flames of fire, or the waves of the sea? They swarmed everywhere, and wherever three or four met, there they eat things without name—the insides of ducks for choice. Our deck passengers, I know, fared sumptuously on offal begged from the steward and flavoured with insect–powder to keep the ants off. This, again, is not natural, for a man should eat like a man if he works like one. I could quite understand after a couple of hours (this has the true Globe–trotter twang to it) spent in Chinatown why the lower–caste Anglo–Saxon hates the Celestial. He frightened me, and so I could take no pleasure in looking at his houses, at his wares, or at himself….

The smell of printer's ink is marvellously penetrating. It drew me up two pair of stairs into an office where the exchanges lay about in delightful disorder, and a little hand–press was clacking out proofs just in the old sweet way. Something like the *Gazette of India* showed that the Straits Settlements—even they—had a Government of their own, and I sighed for a dead past as my eye caught the beautiful official phraseology that never varies. How alike we English are! Here is an extract from a report: "And the Chinese form of decoration which formerly covered the office has been wisely obliterated with whitewash."

That was just what I came to inquire about. What were they going to do with the Chinese decoration all over Penang? Would they try to wisely obliterate that?

The Straits Settlement Council which lives at Singapur had just passed a Bill (Ordinance they call it) putting down all Chinese secret societies in the colony, which measure only awaited the Imperial assent. A little business in Singapur connected with some municipal measure for clearing away overhanging verandahs created a storm, and for three days those who were in the place say the town was entirely at the mercy of the Chinese, who rose all together and made life unpleasant for the authorities. This incident forced the Government to take serious notice of the secret societies who could so control the actions of men, and the result has been a measure which it will not be easy to enforce. A Chinaman *must* have a secret society of some kind. He has been bred up in a country where they were necessary to his comfort, his protection, and the maintenance of his scale of wages from time immemorial, and he will carry them with him as he will carry his opium and his coffin.

"Do you expect then that the societies will collapse by proclamation?" I asked the editor.

"No. There will be a row."

"What row? what sort of a row?"

"More troops, perhaps, and perhaps some gunboats. You see, we shall have Sir Charles Warren then as our Commander–in–Chief at Singapur. Up till the present our military administration has been subordinate to that of Hong–Kong; when that is done away with and we have Sir Charles Warren, things will be different. But there will be a row. Neither you nor I nor any one else will be able to put these things down. Every joss house will be the head of a secret society. What can one do? In the past the Government made some use of them for the detection of crime. Now they are too big and too important to be treated in that way. You will know before long whether we have been able to suppress them. There will be a row."

Certainly the great grievance of Penang is the Chinese question. She would not be human did she not revile her Municipal Commissioners and talk about the unsanitary condition of the island. If nose and eyes and ears be any guide, she is far cleaner even in her streets than many an Indian cantonment, and her water–supply seems perfection. But I sat in that little newspaper office and listened to stories of municipal intrigue that might have suited Serampore or Calcutta, only the names were a little different, and in place of Ghose and Chuckerbutty one heard titles such as Yih Tat, Lo Eng, and the like. The Englishman's aggressive altruism always leads him to build towns for others, and incite aliens to serve on municipal boards. Then he gets tired of his weakness and starts papers to condemn himself. They had a Chinaman on the Municipality last year. They have now got rid of him, and the present body is constituted of two officials and

four non–officials. *Therefore* they complain of the influence of officialdom.

Having thoroughly settled all the differences of Penang to my own great satisfaction, I removed myself to a Chinese theatre set in the open road, and made of sticks and old gunny–bags. The orchestra alone convinced me that there was something radically wrong with the Chinese mind. Once, long ago in Jummu, I heard the infernal clang of the horns used by the Devil–dancers who had come from far beyond Ladakh to do honour to the Prince that day set upon his throne. That was about three thousand miles to the north, but the character of the music was unchanged. A thousand Chinamen stood as close as possible to the horrid din and enjoyed it. Once more, can anything be done to a people without nerves as without digestion, and, if reports speak truly, without morals? But it is not true that they are born with full–sized pigtails. The thing grows, and in its very earliest stages is the prettiest head–dressing imaginable, being soft brown, very fluffy, about three inches long, and dressed as to the end with red silk. An infant pigtail is just like the first tender sprout of a tulip bulb, and would be lovable were not the Chinese baby so very horrible of hue and shape. He isn't as pretty as the pig that Alice nursed in Wonderland, and he lies quite still and never cries. This is because he is afraid of being boiled and eaten. I saw cold boiled babies on a plate being carried through the heart of the town. They said it was only sucking–pig, but I knew better. Dead sucking–pigs don't grin with their eyes open.

About this time the faces of the Chinese frightened me more than ever, so I ran away to the outskirts of the town and saw a windowless house that carried the Square and Compass in gold and teakwood above the door. I took heart at meeting these familiar things again, and knowing that where they were was good fellowship and much charity, in spite of all the secret societies in the world. Penang is to be congratulated on one of the prettiest little lodges in the East.

No. V

Of the Threshold of the Far East and the Dwellers Thereon. a Dissertation Upon the Use of the British Lion - "How the World is Made for Each of Us, How All We Perceive and Know in It Tends to Some Moment's Product--thus When a Soul Declares Itself--to Wit by Its Fruit, the Thing It Does."

"I assure you, Sir, weather as hot as this has not been felt in Singapur for years and years. March is always reckoned our hottest month, but this is quite abnormal."

And I made answer to the stranger wearily:—

"Yes, of course. They always told that lie in the other places. Leave me alone and let me drip."

This is the heat of an orchid–house,—a clinging, remorseless, steam–sweat that knows no variation between night and day. Singapur is another Calcutta, but much more so. In the suburbs they are building rows of cheap houses; in the city they run over you and jostle you into the kennel. These are unfailing signs of commercial prosperity. India ended so long ago that I cannot even talk about the natives of the place. They are all Chinese, except where they are French or Dutch or German. England is by the uninformed supposed to own the island. The rest belongs to China and the Continent, but chiefly China. I knew I had touched the borders of the Celestial Empire when I was thoroughly impregnated with the reek of Chinese tobacco, a fine–cut, greasy, glossy weed, to whose smoke the aroma of a huqa in the cookhouse is all Rimmell's shop.

Providence conducted me along a beach, in full view of five miles of shipping,—five solid miles of masts and funnels,—to a place called Raffles Hotel, where the food is as excellent as the rooms are bad. Let the traveller take note. Feed at Raffles and sleep at the Hotel de l'Europe. I would have done this but for the apparition of two large ladies tastefully attired in bedgowns, who sat with their feet propped on a chair. This Joseph ran; but it turned out that they were Dutch ladies from Batavia, and that that was their national costume till dinner time.

"If, as you say, they had on stockings and dressing–gowns, you have nothing to complain of. They generally wear nothing but a night–gown till five o'clock," quoth a man versed in the habits of the land.

I do not know whether he spoke the truth; I am inclined to think that he did; but now I know what "Batavian grace" really means, I don't approve of it. A lady in a dressing–gown disturbs the mind and prevents careful consideration of the political outlook in Singapur,

which is now supplied with a set of very complete forts, and is hopefully awaiting some nine–inch breach–loaders that are to adorn them. There is something very pathetic in the trustful, clinging attitude of the Colonies, who ought to have been soured and mistrustful long ago. "We hope the Home Government may do this. It is possible that the Home Government may do that," is the burden of the song, and in every place where the Englishman cannot breed successfully must continue to be. Imagine an India fit for permanent habitation by our kin, and consider what a place it would be this day, with the painter cut fifty years ago, fifty thousand miles of railways laid down and ten thousand under survey, and possibly an annual surplus. Is this sedition? Forgive me, but I am looking at the shipping outside the verandah, at the Chinamen in the streets, and at the lazy, languid Englishmen in banians and white jackets stretched on the cane chairs, and these things are not nice. The men are not really lazy, as I will try to show later on, but they lounge and loaf and seem to go to office at eleven, which must be bad for work. And they all talk about going home at indecently short intervals, as though that were their right. Once more, if we could only rear children that did not run to leg and nose in the second generation in this part of the world and one or two others, what an amazing disruption of the Empire there would be before half of a Parnell Commission sitting was accomplished! And then, later, when the freed States had plunged into hot water, fought their fights, overborrowed, overspeculated, and otherwise conducted themselves like younger sons, what a coming together and revision of tariffs, ending in one great iron band girdling the earth. Within that limit free trade. Without, rancorous Protection. It would be too vast a hornet's nest for any combination of Powers to disturb. The dream will not come about for a long time, but we shall accomplish something like it one of these days. The birds of passage from Canada, from Borneo,—Borneo that will have to go through a general rough–and–tumble before she grips her possibilities,—from Australia, from a hundred scattered islands, are saying the same thing: "We are not strong enough yet, but some day We shall be."

Oh! dear people, stewing in India and swearing at all the Governments, it is a glorious thing to be an Englishman. "Our lot has fallen unto us in a fair ground. Yea, we have a goodly heritage." Take a map and look at the long stretch of the Malay Peninsula,—a thousand miles southerly it runs, does it not?—whereon Penang, Malacca, and Singapur are so modestly underlined in red ink. See, now. We have our Residents at every one of the Malay native States of any importance, and right up the line to Kedah and Siam our influence regulates and controls all. Into this land God put first gold and tin, and after these the Englishman, who floats companies, obtains concessions

and goes forward. Just at present, one company alone holds a concession of two thousand square miles in the interior. That means mining rights; and that means a few thousand coolies and a settled administration such as obtains in the big Indian collieries, where the heads of the mines are responsible kings.

With the companies will come the railroads. So far the Straits papers spend their space in talking about them, for at present there are only twenty–three or twenty–four miles of narrow–gauge railway open, near a civilised place called Pirates' Creek, in the Peninsula. The Sultan of Johore is, or has been, wavering over a concession for a railway through his country, which will ultimately connect with this Pirates' Creek line. Singapur is resolved ere long to bridge over the mile or mile–and–a–half Straits between herself and the State of Johore. In this manner a beginning will be made of the southerly extension of Colquhoun's great line running, let us say, from Singapur through the small States and Siam, without a break, into the great Indian railway systems, so that a man will be able to book from here to Calcutta direct. Anything like a business summary of the railway schemes that come up for discussion from time to time would fill a couple of these letters, and would be uncommonly dry reading. You know the sort of "shop" talk that rages among engineers when a new line is being run in India through perfectly known ground, whose traffic–potentialities may be calculated to the last pie. It is very much the same here, with the difference that no one knows for a certainty what the country ahead of the surveys is like, or where the development is likely to stop. This gives breeziness to the conversation. The audacity of the speakers is amazing to one who has been accustomed to see things through Indian eyes. They hint at "running up the Peninsula," establishing communications here, consolidating influence there, and Providence only knows what else; but never a word do they breathe about the necessity for increased troops to stand by and back these little operations. Perhaps they assume that the Home Government will provide, but it does seem strange to hear them cold–bloodedly discussing notions that will inevitably demand doubled garrisons to keep the ventures out of alien hands. However, the merchant–men will do their work, and I suppose we shall borrow three files and a sergeant from somewhere or other when the time comes, and people begin to realise what sort of a gift our Straits Settlements are. It is so cheap to prophesy. They will in the near future grow into—

The Professor looked over my shoulder at this point. "Bosh!" said he. "They will become just a supplementary China—another field for Chinese cheap labour. When the Dutch Settlements were returned in 1815,—all these islands hereabouts, you know,—we should have

handed over these places as well. Look!" He pointed at the swarming Chinamen below.

"Let me dream my dream, 'Fessor. I'll take my hat in a minute and settle the question of Chinese immigration in five minutes." But I confess it was mournful to look into the street, which ought to have been full of Beharis, Madrassis, and men from the Konkan—from our India.

Then up and spake a sunburned man who had interests in North Borneo—he owned caves in the mountains, some of them nine hundred feet high, so please you, and filled with the guano of ages, and had been telling me leech–stories till my flesh crawled. "North Borneo," said he, calmly, "wants a million of labourers to do her any good. One million coolies. Men are wanted everywhere,—in the Peninsula, in Sumatra for the tobacco planting, in Java,—everywhere; but Borneo—the Company's provinces that is to say—needs a million coolies." It is pleasant to oblige a stranger, and I felt that I spoke with India at my back. "We could oblige you with two million or twenty, for the matter of that," said I, generously.

"Your men are no good," said the North Borneo man. "If one man goes away, he must have a whole village to look after his wants. India as a labour field is no good to us, and the Sumatra men say that your coolies either can't or won't tend tobacco properly. We must have China coolies as the land develops."

Oh, India, oh, my country! This it is to have inherited a highly organised civilisation and an ancient precedence code. That your children shall be scoffed at by the alien as useless outside their own pot–bound provinces. Here was a labour outlet, a door to full dinners, through which men—yellow men with pigtails—were pouring by the ten thousand, while in Bengal the cultured native editor was shrieking over "atrocities" committed in moving a few hundred souls a few hundred miles into Assam.

No. VI

Of the Well-dressed Islanders of Singapur and Their Diversions; Proving That All Stations Are Exactly Alike. Shows How One Chicago Jew and an American Child Can Poison the Purest Mind - "We Are Not Divided, All One Body We-- One in Hope and Doctrine, One in Charity."

When one comes to a new station the first thing to do is to call on the inhabitants. This duty I had neglected, preferring to consort with Chinese till the Sabbath, when I learnt that Singapur went to the Botanical Gardens and listened to secular music.

All the Englishmen in the island congregated there. The Botanical Gardens would have been lovely at Kew, but here, where one knew that they were the only place of recreation open to the inhabitants, they were not pleasant. All the plants of all the tropics grew there together, and the orchid–house was roofed with thin battens of wood —just enough to keep off the direct rays of the sun. It held waxy–white splendours from Manila, the Philippines, and tropical Africa—plants that were half–slugs, drawing nourishment apparently from their own wooden labels; but there was no difference between the temperature of the orchid–house and the open air; both were heavy, dank, and steaming. I would have given a month's pay—but I have no month's pay—for a clear breath of stifling hot wind from the sands of Sirsa, for the darkness of a Punjab dust–storm, in exchange for the perspiring plants, and the tree–fern that sweated audibly.

Just when I was most impressed with my measureless distance from India, my carriage advanced to the sound of slow music, and I found myself in the middle of an Indian station—not quite as big as Allahabad, and infinitely prettier than Lucknow. It overlooked the gardens that sloped in ridge and hollow below; and the barracks were set in much greenery, and there was a mess–house that suggested long and cooling drinks, and there walked round about a British band. It was just We Our Noble Selves. In the centre was the pretty *Memsahib* with light hair and fascinating manners, and the plump little *Memsahib* that talks to everybody and is in everybody's confidence, and the spinster fresh from home, and the bean–fed, well–groomed subaltern with the light coat and fox–terrier. On the benches sat the fat colonel, and the large judge, and the engineer's wife, and the merchant–man and his family after their kind—male and female met I them, and but for the little fact that they were entire strangers to me, I would have saluted them all as old friends. I knew what they were talking about, could see them taking stock of one another's dresses out of the corners of their eyes, could see the young men backing and filling across the

ground in order to walk with the young maidens, and could hear the "Do you think so's" and "Not really's" of our polite conversation. It is an awful thing to sit in a hired carriage and watch one's own people, and know that though you know their life, you have neither part nor lot in it.

> "I am a shadow now; alas! alas!
> Upon the skirts of human nature dwelling,"

I said mournfully to the Professor. He was looking at Mrs. —, or some one so like her that it came to the same thing. "Am I travelling round the world to discover *these* people?" said he. "I've seen 'em all before. There's Captain Such–an–one and Colonel Such–another and Miss What's–its–name as large as life and twice as pale."

The Professor had hit it. That was the difference. People in Singapur are dead–white—as white as Naaman—and the veins on the backs of their hands are painted in indigo.

It is as though the Rains were just over, and none of the womenfolk had been allowed to go to the hills. Yet no one talks about the unhealthiness of Singapur. A man lives well and happily until he begins to feel unwell. Then he feels worse because the climate allows him no chance of pulling himself together—and then he dies. Typhoid fever appears to be one gate of death, as it is in India; also liver. The nicest thing in the civil station which lies, of course, far from the native town, and boasts pretty little bungalows—is Thomas—dear, white–robed, swaggering, smoking, swearing Thomas Atkins the unchangeable, who listens to the band and wanders down the bazaars, and slings the unmentionable adjective about the palm trees exactly as though he were in Mian Mir. The 58th (Northamptonshire) live in these parts; so Singapur is quite safe, you see.

Nobody would speak to me in the gardens, though I felt that they ought to have invited me to drink, and I crept back to my hotel to eat six different fresh chutnies with one curry.

* * * * *

I want to go Home! I want to go back to India! I am miserable. The steamship *Nawab* at this time of the year ought to have been empty, instead of which we have one hundred first–class passengers and sixty–six second. All the pretty girls are in the latter class. Something must have happened at Colombo—two steamers must have clashed. We have the results of the collision, and we are a menagerie. The captain says that there ought to have been only ten or twelve

passengers by rights, and had the rush been anticipated, a larger steamer would have been provided. Personally, I consider that half our shipmates ought to be thrown overboard. They are only travelling round the world for pleasure, and that sort of dissipation leads to the forming of hasty and intemperate opinions. Anyhow, give me freedom and the cockroaches of the British India, where we dined on deck, altered the hours of the meals by plebiscite, and were lords of all we saw. You know the chain–gang regulations of the P. and O.: how you must approach the captain standing on your head with your feet waving reverently; how you must crawl into the presence of the chief steward on your belly and call him Thrice–Puissant Bottle–washer; how you must not smoke abaft the sheep–pens; must not stand in the companion; must put on a clean coat when the ship's library is opened; and crowning injustice, must order your drinks for tiffin and dinner one meal in advance? How can a man full of Pilsener beer reach that keen–set state of quiescence needful for ordering his dinner liquor? This shows ignorance of human nature. The P. and O. want healthy competition. They call their captains commanders and act as though 'twere a favour to allow you to embark. Again, freedom and the British India for ever, and down with the comforts of a coolie ship and the prices of a palace!

There are about thirty women on board, and I have been watching with a certain amount of indignation their concerted attempt at killing the stewardess,—a delicate and sweet–mannered lady. I think they will accomplish their end. The saloon is ninety feet long, and the stewardess runs up and down it for nine hours a day. In her intervals of relaxation she carries cups of beef–tea to the frail sylphs who cannot exist without food between 9 A.M. and 1 P.M. This morning she advanced to me and said, as though it were the most natural thing in the world: "Shall I take away your tea–cup, sir?" She was a real white woman, and the saloon was full of hulking, half–bred Portuguese. One young Englishman let her take his cup, and actually did not turn round when he handed it. This is awful, and teaches me, as nothing else has done, how far I am from the blessed East. She (the stewardess) talks standing up, to men who sit down!

We in India are currently supposed to be unkind to our servants. I should very much like to see a sweeper doing one–half of the work these strapping white matrons and maids exact from their sister. They make her carry things about and don't even say, "Thank you." She has no name, and if you bawl, "Stewardess," she is bound to come. Isn't it degrading?

But the real reason of my wish to return is because I have met a lump of Chicago Jews and am afraid that I shall meet many more. The ship is full of Americans, but the American–German–Jew boy is the

most awful of all. One of them has money, and wanders from bow to stern asking strangers to drink, bossing lotteries on the run, and committing other atrocities. It is currently reported that he is dying. Unfortunately he does not die quickly enough.

But the real monstrosity of the ship is an American who is not quite grown up. I cannot call it a boy, though officially it is only eight, wears a striped jacket, and eats with the children. It has the wearied appearance of an infant monkey—there are lines round its mouth and under its eyebrows. When it has nothing else to do it will answer to the name of Albert. It has been two years on the continuous travel; has spent a month in India; has seen Constantinople, Tripoli, Spain; has lived in tents and on horseback for thirty days and thirty nights, as it was careful to inform me; and has exhausted the round of this world's delights. There is no flesh on its bones, and it lives in the smoking–room financing the arrangements of the daily lottery. I was afraid of it, but it followed me, and in a level expressionless voice began to tell me how lotteries were constructed. When I protested that I knew, it continued without regarding the interruption, and finally, as a reward for my patience, volunteered to give me the names and idiosyncracies of all on board. Then it vanished through the smoking–room window because the door was only eight feet high, and therefore too narrow for that bulk of abnormal experiences. On certain subjects it was partly better informed than I; on others it displayed the infinite credulity of a two–year–old. But the wearied eyes were ever the same. They will be the same when it is fifty. I was more sorry for it than I could say. All its reminiscences had got jumbled, and incidents of Spain were baled into Turkey and India. Some day a schoolmaster will get hold of it and try to educate it, and I should dearly like to see at which end he will begin. The head is too full already and the—the other part does not exist. Albert is, I presume, but an ordinary American child. He was to me a revelation. Now I want to see a little American girl—but not now—not just now. My nerves are shattered by the Jews and Albert; and unless they recover their tone I shall turn back at Yokohama.

No. VII

Shows How I Arrived in China and Saw Entirely Through the Great Wall and Out Upon the Other Side - "Where Naked Ignorance Delivers Brawling Judgments All Day Long on All Things Unashamed."

The past few days on the *Nawab* have been spent amid a new people and a very strange one. There were speculators from South Africa: financiers from home (these never talked in anything under hundreds of thousands of pounds and, I fear, bluffed awfully); there were Consuls of far–off China ports and partners of China shipping houses talking a talk and thinking thoughts as different from Ours as is Our slang from the slang of London. But it would not interest you to learn the story of our shipload—to hear about the hard–headed Scotch merchant with a taste for spiritualism, who begged me to tell him whether there was really anything in Theosophy and whether Tibet was full of levitating *chelas*, as he believed; or of the little London curate out for a holiday who had seen India and had faith in the progress of missionary work there—who believed that the C. M. S. was shaking the thoughts and convictions of the masses, and that the Word of the Lord would ere long prevail above all other councils. He in the night–watches tackled and disposed of the great mysteries of Life and Death, and was looking forward to a lifetime of toil amid a parish without a single rich man in it.

When you are in the China Seas be careful to keep all your flannel–wear to hand. In an hour the steamer swung from tropical heat (including prickly) to a cold raw fog, as wet as a Scotch mist. Morning gave us a new world—somewhere between Heaven and Earth. The sea was smoked glass: reddish grey islands lay upon it under fog–banks that hovered fifty feet above our heads. The squat sails of junks danced for an instant like autumn leaves in the breeze and disappeared, and there was no solidity in the islands against which the glassy levels splintered in snow. The steamer groaned and grunted and howled because she was so damp and miserable, and I groaned also because the guide–book said that Hong–Kong had the finest harbour in the world, and I could not see two hundred yards in any direction. Yet this ghost–like in–gliding through the belted fog was livelily mysterious, and became more so when the movement of the air vouchsafed us a glimpse of a warehouse and a derrick, both apparently close aboard, and behind them the shoulder of a mountain. We made our way into a sea of flat–nosed boats all manned by most muscular humans, and the Professor said that the time to study the Chinese question was now. We, however, were carrying a new general

to these parts, and nice, new, well–fitting uniforms came off to make him welcome; and in the contemplation of things too long withheld from me I forgot about the Pigtails. Gentlemen of the mess–room, who would wear linen coats on parade if you could, wait till you have been a month without seeing a patrol–jacket or hearing a spur go *ling–a–ling*, and you will know why civilians want you always to wear uniform. The General, by the way, was a nice General. He did not know much about the Indian Army or the ways of a gentleman called Roberts, if I recollect aright; but he said that Lord Wolseley was going to be Commander–in–Chief one of these days on account of the pressing needs of our Army. He was a revelation because he talked about nothing but English military matters, which are very, very different from Indian ones, and are mixed up with politics.

All Hong–Kong is built on the sea face; the rest is fog. One muddy road runs for ever in front of a line of houses which are partly Chowringhee and partly Rotherhithe. You live in the houses, and when wearied of this, walk across the road and drop into the sea, if you can find a square foot of unencumbered water. So vast is the accumulation of country shipping, and such is its dirtiness as it rubs against the bund, that the superior inhabitants are compelled to hang their boats from davits above the common craft, who are greatly disturbed by a multitude of steam–launches. These ply for amusement and the pleasure of whistling, and are held in such small esteem that every hotel owns one, and the others are masterless. Beyond the launches lie more steamers than the eye can count, and four out of five of these belong to Us. I was proud when I saw the shipping at Singapur, but I swell with patriotism as I watch the fleets of Hong–Kong from the balcony of the Victoria Hotel. I can almost spit into the water; but many mariners stand below and they are a strong breed.

How recklessly selfish does a traveller become! We had dropped for more than ten days all the world outside our trunks, and almost the first word in the hotel was: "John Bright is dead, and there has been an awful hurricane at Samoa."

"Ah! indeed that's very sad; but look here, where do you say my rooms are?" At home the news would have given talk for half a day. It was dismissed in half the length of a hotel corridor. One cannot sit down to think with a new world humming outside the window—with all China to enter upon and possess.

A rattling of trunks in the halls—a click of heels—and the apparition of an enormous gaunt woman wrestling with a small Madrassi servant…. "Yes—I haf travelled everywhere and I shall travel everywhere else. I go now to Shanghai and Pekin. I have been in Moldavia, Russia, Beyrout, all Persia, Colombo, Delhi, Dacca, Benares, Allahabad, Peshawar, the Ali Musjid in that pass, Malabar, Singapur,

Penang, here in this place, and Canton. I am Austrian–Croat, and I shall see the States of America and perhaps Ireland. I travel for ever; I am—how you call?—*veuve*—widow. My husband, he was dead; and so I am sad—I am always sad und so I trafel. I am alife of course, but I do not live. You onderstandt? Always sad. Vill you tell them the name of the ship to which they shall warf my trunks now. You trafel for pleasure? So! I trafel because I am alone und sad—always sad."

The trunks disappeared, the door shut, the heels clicked down the passage, and I was left scratching my head in wonder. How did that conversation begin—why did it end, and what is the use of meeting eccentricities who never explained themselves? I shall never get an answer, but that conversation is true, every word of it. I see now where the fragmentary school of novelists get their material from.

When I went into the streets of Hong–Kong I stepped into thick slushy London mud of the kind that strikes chilly through the boot, and the rattle of innumerable wheels was as the rattle of hansoms. A soaking rain fell, and all the sahibs hailed 'rickshaws,—they call them 'ricks here,—and the wind was chillier than the rain. It was the first touch of honest weather since Calcutta. No wonder with such a climate that Hong–Kong was ten times livelier than Singapur, that there were signs of building everywhere, and gas–jets in all the houses, that colonnades and domes were scattered broadcast, and the Englishmen walked as Englishmen should—hurriedly and looking forward. All the length of the main street was verandahed, and the Europe shops squandered plate glass by the square yard. (*Nota bene.*—As in Simla so elsewhere: mistrust the plate glass shops. You pay for their fittings in each purchase.)

The same Providence that runs big rivers so near to large cities puts main thoroughfares close to big hotels. I went down Queen Street, which is not very hilly. All the other streets that I looked up were built in steps after the fashion of Clovelly, and under blue skies would have given the Professor scores of good photographs. The rain and the fog blotted the views. Each upward–climbing street ran out in white mist that covered the sides of a hill, and the downward–sloping ones were lost in the steam from the waters of the harbour, and both were very strange to see. "Hi–yi–yow," said my 'rickshaw coolie and balanced me on one wheel. I got out and met first a German with a beard, then three jolly sailor boys from a man–of–war, then a sergeant of Sappers, then a Parsee, then two Arabs, then an American, then a Jew, then a few thousand Chinese all carrying something, and then the Professor.

"They make plates—instantaneous plates—in Tokio, I'm told. What d'you think of that?" he said. "Why, in India, the Survey Department are the only people who make their own plates.

Instantaneous plates in Tokio; think of it!"

I had owed the Professor one for a long time. "After all," I replied, "it strikes me that we have made the mistake of thinking too much of India. We thought we were civilised, for instance. Let us take a lower place. This beats Calcutta into a hamlet."

And in good truth it did, because it was clean beyond the ordinary, because the houses were uniform, three storied, and verandahed, and the pavements were of stone. I met one horse, very ashamed of himself, who was looking after a cart on the sea road, but upstairs there are no vehicles save 'rickshaws. Hong–Kong has killed the romance of the 'rickshaw in my mind. They ought to be sacred to pretty ladies, instead of which men go to office in them, officers in full canonicals use them; tars try to squeeze in two abreast, and from what I have heard down at the barracks they do occasionally bring to the guard–room the drunken defaulter. "He falls asleep inside of it, Sir, and saves trouble." The Chinese naturally have the town for their own, and profit by all our building improvements and regulations. Their golden and red signs flame down the Queen's Road, but they are careful to supplement their own tongue by well–executed Europe lettering. I found only one exception, thus:—

> Fussing, Garpenter
> And Gabinet Naktr
> Has good Gabi
> Nets tor Sale.

The shops are made to catch the sailor and the curio hunter, and they succeed admirably. When you come to these parts put all your money in a bank and tell the manager man not to give it you, however much you ask. So shall you be saved from bankruptcy.

The Professor and I made a pilgrimage from Kee Sing even unto Yi King, who sells the decomposed fowl, and each shop was good. Though it sold shoes or sucking pigs, there was some delicacy of carving or gilded tracery in front to hold the eye, and each thing was quaint and striking of its kind. A fragment of twisted roots helped by a few strokes into the likeness of huddled devils, a running knop and flower cornice, a dull red and gold half–door, a split bamboo screen—they were all good, and their joinings and splicings and mortisings were accurate. The baskets of the coolies were good in shape, and the rattan fastenings that clenched them to the polished bamboo yoke were whipped down, so that there were no loose ends. You could slide in and out the drawers in the slung chests of the man who sold dinners to the 'rickshaw coolies; and the pistons of the little wooden hand–pumps in the shops worked accurately in their sockets.

I was studying these things while the Professor was roaming through carved ivories, broidered silks, panels of inlay, tortoise–shell filigree, jade–tipped pipes, and the God of Art only knows what else.

"I don't think even as much of him (meaning our Indian craftsman) as I used to do," said the Professor, taking up a tiny ivory grotesque of a small baby trying to pull a water–buffalo out of its wallow—the whole story of beast and baby written in the hard ivory. The same thought was in both our minds; we had gone near the subject once or twice before.

"They are a hundred times his superior in mere idea—let alone execution," said the Professor, his hand on a sketch in woods and gems of a woman caught in a gale of wind protecting her baby from its violence.

"Yes; and don't you see that *they* only introduce aniline dyes into things intended for *us*. Whereas *he* wears them on his body whenever he can. What made this yellow image of a shopman here take delight in a dwarf orange tree in a turquoise blue pot?" I continued, sorting a bundle of cheap China spoons—all good in form, colour, and use. The big–bellied Chinese lanterns above us swayed in the wind with a soft chafing of oiled paper, but they made no sign, and the shopkeeper in blue was equally useless.

"You wanchee buy? Heap plitty things here," said he; and he filled a tobacco–pipe from a dull green leather pouch held at the mouth with a little bracelet of plasma, or it might have been the very jade. He was playing with a brown–wood abacus, and by his side was his day–book bound in oiled paper, and the tray of Indian ink, with the brushes and the porcelain supports for the brushes. He made an entry in his book and daintily painted in his latest transaction. The Chinese of course have been doing this for a few thousand years, but Life, and its experiences, is as new to me as it was to Adam, and I marvelled.

"Wanchee buy?" reiterated the shopman after he had made his last flourish.

"You," said I, in the new tongue which I am acquiring, "wanchee know one piecee information b'long my pidgin. Savvy these things? Have got soul, you?"

"Have got how?"

"Have got one piecee soul—allee same spilit? No savvy? This way then—your people lookee allee same devil; but makee culio allee same pocket–Joss, and not giving any explanation. Why–for are you such a horrible contradiction?"

"No savvy. Two dollar an' half," he said, balancing a cabinet in his hand. The Professor had not heard. His mind was oppressed with the fate of the Hindu.

"There are three races who can work," said the Professor, looking

down the seething street where the 'rickshaws tore up the slush, and the babel of Cantonese, and pidgin went up to the yellow fog in a jumbled snarl.

"But there is only one that can swarm," I answered. "The Hindu cuts his own throat and dies, and there are too few of the Sahib–log to last for ever. These people work and spread. They must have souls or they couldn't understand pretty things."

"I can't make it out," said the Professor. "They are better artists than the Hindu,—that carving you are looking at is Japanese, by the way,—better artists and stronger workmen, man for man. They pack close and eat everything, and they can live on nothing."

"And I've been praising the beauties of Indian Art all my days." It was a little disappointing when you come to think of it, but I tried to console myself by the thought that the two lay so far apart there was no comparison possible. And yet accuracy is surely the touchstone of all Art.

"They will overwhelm the world," said the Professor, calmly, and he went out to buy tea.

Neither at Penang, Singapur, nor this place have I seen a single Chinaman asleep while daylight lasted. Nor have I seen twenty men who were obviously loafing. All were going to some definite end—if it were only like the coolie on the wharf, to steal wood from the scaffolding of a half–built house. In his own land, I believe, the Chinaman is treated with a certain amount of carelessness, not to say ferocity. Where he hides his love of art, the Heaven that made him out of the yellow earth that holds so much iron only knows. His love is for little things, or else why should he get quaint pendants for his pipe, and at the backmost back of his shop build up for himself a bowerbird's collection of odds and ends, every one of which has beauty if you hold it sufficiently close to the eye. It grieves me that I cannot account for the ideas of a few hundred million men in a few hours. This much, however, seems certain. If we had control over as many Chinamen as we have natives of India, and had given them one tithe of the cossetting, the painful pushing forward, and studious, even nervous, regard of their interests and aspirations that we have given to India, we should long ago have been expelled from, or have reaped the reward of, the richest land on the face of the earth. A pair of my shoes have been, oddly enough, wrapped in a newspaper which carries for its motto the words, "There is no Indian nation, though there exists the germs of an Indian nationality," or something very like that. This thing has been moving me to unholy laughter. The great big lazy land that we nurse and wrap in cotton–wool, and ask every morning whether it is strong enough to get out of bed, seems like a heavy soft cloud on the far–away horizon; and the babble that we

were wont to raise about its precious future and its possibilities, no more than the talk of children in the streets who have made a horse out of a pea–pod and match–sticks, and wonder if it will ever walk. I am sadly out of conceit of mine own other—not mother—country now that I have had my boots blacked at once every time I happened to take them off. The blacker did not do it for the sake of a gratuity, but because it was his work. Like the beaver of old, he had to climb that tree; the dogs were after him. There was competition.

* * * * *

Is there really such a place as Hong–Kong? People say so, but I have not yet seen it. Once indeed the clouds lifted and I saw a granite house perched like a cherub on nothing, a thousand feet above the town. It looked as if it might be the beginning of a civil station, but a man came up the street and said, "See this fog It will be like this till September. You'd better go away." I shall not go. I shall encamp in front of the place until the fog lifts and the rain ceases. At present, and it is the third day of April, I am sitting in front of a large coal fire and thinking of the "frosty Caucasus"—you poor creatures in torment afar. And you think as you go to office and orderly–room that you are helping forward England's mission in the East. 'Tis a pretty delusion, and I am sorry to destroy it, but you have conquered the wrong country.

Let us annex China.

No. VIII

Of Jenny and Her Friends. Showing How a Man May Go to See Life and Meet Death There. of the Felicity of Life and the Happiness of Corinthian Kate. the Woman and the Cholera - "Love and Let Love, and So Will I, but, Sweet, for Me No More With You, Not While I Live, Not Though I Die. Good Night, Good-by!"

I am entirely the man about town, and sickness is no word for my sentiments. It began with an idle word in a bar–room. It ended goodness knows where. That the world should hold French, German, and Italian ladies of the ancient profession is no great marvel; but it is, to one who has lived in India, something shocking to meet again Englishwomen in the same sisterhood. When an opulent papa sends his son and heir round the world to enlarge his mind, does he reflect, I wonder, on the places into which the innocent strolls under the guidance of equally inexperienced friends? I am disposed to think that he does not. In the interest of the opulent papa, and from a genuine desire to see what they call Life, with a capital Hell, I went through Hong–Kong for the space of a night. I am glad that I am not a happy father with a stray son who thinks that he knows all the ropes. Vice must be pretty much the same all the round world over, but if a man wishes to get out of pleasure with it, let him go to Hong–Kong.

"Of course things are out and away better at 'Frisco," said my guide, "but we consider this very fair for the Island." It was not till a fat person in a black dressing–gown began to squeal demands for horrible stuff called "a bottle of wine" that I began to understand the glory of the situation. I was seeing Life. "Life" is a great thing. It consists in swigging sweet champagne that was stolen from a steward of the P. and O., and exchanging bad words with pale–faced baggages who laugh demnibly without effort and without emotion. The *argot* of the real "chippy" (this means man of the world—*Anglice*, a half–drunk youth with his hat on the back of his head) is not easy to come at. It requires an apprenticeship in America. I stood appalled at the depth and richness of the American language, of which I was privileged to hear a special dialect. There were girls who had been to Leadville and Denver and the wilds of the wilder West, who had acted in minor companies, and who had generally misconducted themselves in a hundred weary ways. They chattered like daws and shovelled down the sickly liquor that made the rooms reek. As long as they talked sensibly things were amusing, but a sufficiency of liquor made the mask drop, and verily they swore by all their gods, chief of whom is Obidicut. Very many men have heard a white woman swear, but some few, and among these I have been, are denied the experience. It is

quite a revelation; and if nobody tilts you backwards out of your chair, you can reflect on heaps of things connected with it. So they cursed and they drank and they told tales, sitting in a circle, till I felt that this was really Life and a thing to be quitted if I wished to like it. The young man who knew a thing or two, and gave the girls leave to sell him if they could, was there of course, and the hussies sold him as he stood for all he considered himself worth; and I saw the by–play. Surely the safest way to be fooled is to know everything. Then there was an interlude and some more shrieks and howls, which the generous public took as indicating immense mirth and enjoyment of Life; and I came to yet another establishment, where the landlady lacked the half of her left lung, as a cough betrayed, but was none the less amusing in a dreary way, until she also dropped the mask and the playful jesting began. All the jokes I had heard before at the other place. It is a poor sort of Life that cannot spring one new jest a day. More than ever did the youth cock his hat and explain that he was a real "chippy," and that there were no flies on him. Any one without a cast–iron head would be "real chippy" next morning after one glass of that sirupy champagne. I understand now why men feel insulted when sweet fizz is offered to them. The second interview closed as the landlady gracefully coughed us into the passage, and so into the healthy, silent streets. She was very ill indeed, and announced that she had but four months more to live.

"Are we going to hold these dismal levees all through the night?" I demanded at the fourth house, where I dreaded the repetition of the thrice–told tales.

"It's better in 'Frisco. Must amuse the girls a little bit, y'know. Walk round and wake 'em up. That's Life. You never saw it in India?" was the reply.

"No, thank God, I didn't. A week of this would make me hang myself," I returned, leaning wearily against a door–post. There were very loud sounds of revelry by night here, and the inmates needed no waking up. One of them was recovering from a debauch of three days, and the other was just entering upon the same course. Providence protected me all through. A certain austere beauty of countenance had made every one take me for a doctor or a parson—a qualified parson, I think; and so I was spared many of the more pronounced jokes, and could sit and contemplate the Life that was so sweet. I thought of the Oxonian in *Tom and Jerry* playing jigs at the spinet,—you seen the old–fashioned plate,—while Corinthian Tom and Corinthian Kate danced a stately saraband in a little carpeted room. The worst of it was, the women were real women and pretty, and like some people I knew, and when they stopped the insensate racket for a while they were well behaved.

"Pass for real ladies anywhere," said my friend. "Aren't these things well managed?"

Then Corinthian Kate began to bellow for more drinks,—it was three in the morning,—and the current of hideous talk recommenced.

They spoke about themselves as "gay." This does not look much on paper. To appreciate the full grimness of the sarcasm hear it from their lips amid their own surroundings. I winked with vigour to show that I appreciated Life and was a real chippy, and that upon me, too, there were no flies. There is an intoxication in company that carries a man to excess of mirth; but when a party of four deliberately sit down to drink and swear, the bottom tumbles out of the amusement somehow, and loathing and boredom follow. A night's reflection has convinced me that there is no hell for these women in another world. They have their own in this Life, and I have been through it a little way. Still carrying the brevet rank of doctor, it was my duty to watch through the night to the dawn a patient—gay, *toujours* gay, remember—quivering on the verge of a complaint called the "jumps." Corinthian Kate will get hers later on. Her companion, emerging from a heavy drink, was more than enough for me. She was an unmitigated horror, until I lost detestation in genuine pity. The fear of death was upon her for a reason that you shall hear.

"I say, you say you come from India. Do you know anything about cholera?"

"A little," I answered. The voice of the questioner was cracked and quavering. A long pause.

"I say, Doctor, what are the symptoms of cholera? A woman died just over the street there last week."

"This is pleasant," I thought. "But I must remember that it is Life."

"She died last week—cholera. My God, I tell you she was dead in six hours! I guess I'll get cholera, too. I can't, though. Can I? I thought I had it two days ago. It hurt me terribly. I can't get it, can I? It never attacks people twice, does it? Oh, say it doesn't and be damned to you. Doctor, what are the symptoms of cholera?"

I waited till she had detailed her own attack, assured her that these and no others were the symptoms, and—may this be set to my credit—that cholera never attacked twice. This soothed her for ten minutes. Then she sprang up with an oath and shrieked:—

"I won't be buried in Hong–Kong. That frightens me. When I die—of cholera—take me to 'Frisco and bury me there. In 'Frisco—Lone Mountain 'Frisco—you hear, Doctor?"

I heard and promised. Outside the birds were beginning to twitter and the dawn was pencilling the shutters.

"I say, Doctor, did you ever know Cora Pearl?"

"'Knew *of* her." I wondered whether she was going to walk round

the room to all eternity with her eyes glaring at the ceiling and her hands twisting and untwisting one within the other.

"Well," she began, in an impressive whisper, "it was young Duval shot himself on her mat and made a bloody mess there. I mean real bloody. You don't carry a pistol, Doctor? Savile did. You didn't know Savile. He was my husband in the States. But I'm English, pure English. That's what I am. Let's have a bottle of wine, I'm so nervous. Not good for me? What the—No, you're a doctor. You know what's good against cholera. Tell me! Tell me."

She crossed to the shutters and stared out, her hand upon the bolt, and the bolt clacked against the wood because of the tremulous hand.

"I tell you Corinthian Kate's drunk—full as she can hold. She's always drinking. Did you ever see my shoulder—these two marks on it? They were given me by a man—a gentleman—the night before last. I *didn't* fall against any furniture. He struck me with his cane twice, the beast, the beast, the beast! If I had been full, I'd have knocked the dust out of him. The beast! But I only went into the verandah and cried fit to break my heart. Oh, the beast!"

She paced the room, chafing her shoulder and crooning over it as though it were an animal. Then she swore at the man. Then she fell into a sort of stupor, but moaned and swore at the man in her sleep, and wailed for her *amah* to come and dress her shoulder.

Asleep she was not unlovely, but the mouth twitched and the body was shaken with shiverings, and there was no peace in her at all. Daylight showed her purple–eyed, slack–cheeked, and staring, racked with a headache and the nervous twitches. Indeed I was seeing Life; but it did not amuse me, for I felt that I, though I only made capital of her extreme woe, was guilty equally with the rest of my kind that had brought her here.

Then she told lies. At least I was informed that they were lies later on by the real man of the world. They related to herself and her people, and if untrue must have been motiveless, for all was sordid and sorrowful, though she tried to gild the page with a book of photos which linked her to her past. Not being a man of the world, I prefer to believe that the tales were true, and thank her for the honour she did me in the telling.

I had fancied that the house had nothing sadder to show me than her face. Here was I wrong. Corinthian Kate had really been drinking, and rose up reeling drunk, which is an awful thing to witness, and makes one's head ache sympathetically. Something had gone wrong in the slatternly menage where the plated tea–services were mixed with cheap China; and the household was being called to account. I watched her clutching the mosquito net for support, a horror and an

offence in the eye of the guiltless day. I heard her swear in a thick, sodden voice as I have never yet heard a man swear, and I marvelled that the house did not thunder in on our heads. Her companion interposed, but was borne down by a torrent of blasphemy, and the half a dozen little dogs that infested the room removed themselves beyond reach of Corinthian Kate's hand or foot. That she was a handsome woman only made the matter worse. The companion collapsed shivering on one of the couches, and Kate swayed to and fro and cursed God and man and earth and heaven with puffed lips. If Alma Tadema could have painted her,—an arrangement in white, black hair, flashing eyes, and bare feet,—we should have seen the true likeness of the Eternal Priestess of Humanity. Or she would have been better drawn when the passion was over, tottering across the room, a champagne glass held high above her head, shouting, at ten o'clock in the morning, for some more of the infamous brewage that was even then poisoning the air of the whole house. She got her liquor, and the two women sat down to share it together. That was their breakfast.

I went away very sick and miserable, and as the door closed I saw the two drinking.

"Out and away better in 'Frisco," said the real "chippy" one. "But you see they are awfully nice—could pass for ladies any time they like. I tell you a man has to go round and keep his eyes open among them when he's seeing a little sporting life."

I have seen all that I wish to see, and henceforward I will pass. There may be better champagne and better drinkers in 'Frisco and elsewhere, but the talk will be the same, and the mouldiness and staleness of it all will be the same till the end of time. If this be Life, give me a little honest death, without drinks and without foul jesting. Anyway you look at it 'tis a poor performance, badly played, and too near to a tragedy to be pleasant. But it seems to amuse the young man wandering about the world, and I cannot believe that it is altogether good for him—unless, indeed, it makes him fonder of his home.

And mine was the greater sin! I was driven by no gust of passion, but went in cold blood to make my account of this Inferno, and to measure the measureless miseries of life. For the wholly insignificant sum of thirty dollars I had purchased information and disgust more than I required, and the right to look after a woman half crazed with drink and fear the third part of a terrible night. Mine was the greater sin.

When we stepped back into the world I was glad that the fog stood between myself and the heaven above.

No. IX

Some Talk With a Taipan and a General; Proves in What Manner a Sea Picnic May be a Success - "I Should Like to Rise and Go Where the Golden Apples Grow, Where Beneath Another Sky Parrot-islands Anchored Lie." - --R. L. Stevenson.

Hong–Kong was so much alive, so built, so lighted, and so bloatedly rich to all outward appearance that I wanted to know how these things came about. You can't lavish granite by the cubic ton for nothing, or rivet your cliffs with Portland cement, or build a five–mile bund, or establish a club like a small palace. I sought a *Taipan*, which means the head of an English trading firm. He was the biggest *Taipan* on the island, and quite the nicest. He owned ships and wharves and houses and mines and a hundred other things. To him said I:—

"O *Taipan*, I am a poor person from Calcutta, and the liveliness of your place astounds me. How is it that every one smells of money; whence come your municipal improvements; and why are the White Men so restless?"

Said the *Taipan*: "It is because the island is going ahead mightily. Because everything pays. Observe this share–list."

He took me down a list of thirty or less companies—steam–launch companies, mining, rope–weaving, dock, trading, agency and general companies—and with five exceptions all the shares were at premium —some a hundred, some five hundred, and others only fifty.

"It is not a boom," said the *Taipan*. "It is genuine. Nearly every man you meet in these parts is a broker, and he floats companies."

I looked out of the window and beheld how companies were floated. Three men with their hats on the back of their heads converse for ten minutes. To these enters a fourth with a pocket–book. Then all four dive into the Hong–Kong Hotel for material wherewith to float themselves and—there is your company!

"From these things," said the *Taipan*, "comes the wealth of Hong–Kong. Every notion here pays, from the dairy–farm upwards. We have passed through our bad times and come to the fat years."

He told me tales of the old times—pityingly because he knew I could not understand. All I could tell was that the place dressed by America—from the hair–cutters' saloons to the liquor–bars. The faces of men were turned to the Golden Gate even while they floated most of the Singapur companies. There is not sufficient push in Singapur alone, so Hong–Kong helps. Circulars of new companies lay on the bank counters. I moved amid a maze of interests that I could not comprehend, and spoke to men whose minds were at Hankow, Foochoo, Amoy, or even further—beyond the Yangtze gorges where

the Englishman trades.

After a while I escaped from the company–floaters because I knew I could not understand them, and ran up a hill. Hong–Kong is all hill except when the fog shuts out everything except the sea. Tree ferns sprouted on the ground and azaleas mixed with the ferns, and there were bamboos over all. Consequently it was only natural that I should find a tramway that stood on its head and waved its feet in the mist. They called it the Victoria Gap Tramway and hauled it up with a rope. It ran up a hill into space at an angle of 65°, and to those who have seen the Rigi, Mount Washington, a switchback railway, and the like would not have been impressive. But neither you nor I have ever been hauled from Annandale to the Chaura Maidàn in a bee–line with a five–hundred–foot drop on the off–side, and we are at liberty to marvel. It is not proper to run up inclined ways at the tail of a string, more especially when you cannot see two yards in front of you and all earth below is a swirling cauldron of mist. Nor, unless you are warned of the opticalness of the delusion, is it nice to see from your seat, houses and trees at magic–lantern angles. Such things, before tiffin, are worse than the long roll of the China seas.

They turned me out twelve hundred feet above the city on the military road to Dalhousie, as it will be when India has a surplus. Then they brought me a glorified dandy which, not knowing any better, they called a chair. Except that it is too long to run corners easily, a chair is vastly superior to a dandy. It is more like a Bombay side *tonjon*—the kind we use at Mahableshwar. You sit in a wicker chair, slung low on ten feet of elastic wooden shafting, and there are light blinds against the rain.

"We are now," said the Professor, as he wrung out his hat gemmed with the dews of the driving mist, "we are now on a pleasure trip. This is the road to Chakrata in the rains."

"Nay," said I; "it is from Solon to Kasauli that we are going. Look at the black rocks."

"Bosh!" said the Professor. "This is a civilised country. Look at the road, look at the railings—look at the gutters."

And as I hope never to go to Solon again, the road was cemented, the railings were of iron mortised into granite blocks, and the gutters were paved. 'Twas no wider than a hill–path, but if it had been the Viceroy's pet promenade it could not have been better kept. There was no view. That was why the Professor had taken his camera. We passed coolies widening the road, and houses shut up and deserted, solid squat little houses made of stone, with pretty names after our hill–station custom—Townend, Craggylands, and the like—and at these things my heart burned within me. Hong–Kong has no right to mix itself up with Mussoorie in this fashion. We came to the meeting–place

of the winds, eighteen hundred feet above all the world, and saw forty miles of clouds. That was the Peak—the great view–place of the island. A laundry on a washing day would have been more interesting.

"Let us go down, Professor," said I, "and we'll get our money back. This isn't a view."

We descended by the marvellous tramway, each pretending to be as little upset as the other, and started in pursuit of a Chinese burying–ground.

"Go to the Happy Valley," said an expert. "The Happy Valley, where the racecourse and the cemeteries are."

"It's Mussoorie," said the Professor. "I knew it all along."

It was Mussoorie, though we had to go through a half–mile of Portsmouth Hard first. Soldiers grinned at us from the verandahs of their most solid three–storied barracks; all the blue–jackets of all the China squadron were congregated in the Royal Navy Seaman's Club, and they beamed upon us. The bluejacket is a beautiful creature, and very healthy, but … I gave my heart to Thomas Atkins long ago, and him I love.

By the way, how is it that a Highland regiment—the Argyll and Southerlandshire for instance—get such good recruits? Do the kilt and sporran bring in brawny youngsters of five–foot nine, and thirty–nine inch round the chest? The Navy draws well–built men also. How is it that Our infantry regiments fare so badly?

We came to the Happy Valley by way of a monument to certain dead Englishmen. Such things cease to move emotion after a little while. They are but the seed of the great harvest whereof our children's children shall assuredly reap the fruits. The men were killed in a fight, or by disease. We hold Hong–Kong, and by Our strength and wisdom it is a great city, built upon a rock, and furnished with a dear little seven–furlong racecourse set in the hills, and fringed as to one side with the homes of the dead—Mahometan, Christian, and Parsee. A wall of bamboos shuts off the course and the grand–stand from the cemeteries. It may be good enough for Hong–Kong, but would you care to watch your pony running with a grim reminder of "gone to the drawer" not fifty feet behind you? Very beautiful are the cemeteries, and very carefully tended. The rocky hillside rises so near to them that the more recent dead can almost command a view of the racing as they lie. Even this far from the strife of the Churches they bury the different sects of Christians apart. One creed paints its wall white, and the other blue. The latter, as close to the race–stand as may be, writes in straggling letters, "*Hodie mihi cras tibi.*" No, I should *not* care to race in Hong–Kong. The scornful assemblage behind the grand–stand would be enough to ruin any luck.

Chinamen do not approve of showing their cemeteries. We hunted

ours from ledge to ledge of the hillsides, through crops and woods and crops again, till we came to a village of black and white pigs and riven red rocks beyond which the dead lay. It was a third–rate place, but was pretty. I have studied that oilskin mystery, the Chinaman, for at least five days, and why he should elect to be buried in good scenery, and by what means he knows good scenery when he sees it, I cannot fathom. But he gets it when the sight is taken from him, and his friends fire crackers above him in token of the triumph.

That night I dined with the *Taipan* in a palace. They say the merchant prince of Calcutta is dead—killed by exchange. Hong–Kong ought to be able to supply one or two samples. The funny thing in the midst of all this wealth—wealth such as one reads about in novels—is to hear the curious deference that is paid to Calcutta. Console yourselves with that, gentlemen of the Ditch, for by my faith, it is the one thing that you can boast of. At this dinner I learned that Hong–Kong was impregnable and that China was rapidly importing twelve and forty ton guns for the defence of her coasts. The one statement I doubted, but the other was truth. Those who have occasion to speak of China in these parts do so deferentially, as who should say: "Germany intends such and such," or "These are the views of Russia." The very men who talk thus are doing their best to force upon the great Empire all the stimulants of the West—railways, tram lines, and so forth. What will happen when China really wakes up, runs a line from Shanghai to Lhassa, starts another line of imperial Yellow Flag immigrant steamers, and really works and controls her own gun–factories and arsenals? The energetic Englishmen who ship the forty–tonners are helping to this end, but all they say is: "We're well paid for what we do. There's no sentiment in business, and anyhow, China will never go to war with England." Indeed, there is no sentiment in business. The *Taipan's* palace, full of all things beautiful, and flowers more lovely than the gem–like cabinets they adorned, would have made happy half a hundred young men craving for luxury, and might have made them writers, singers, and poets. It was inhabited by men with big heads and straight eyes, who sat among the splendours and talked business.

If I were not going to be a Burman when I die I would be a *Taipan* at Hong–Kong. He knows so much and he deals so largely with Princes and Powers, and he has a flag of his very own which he pins on to all his steamers.

The blessed chance that looks after travellers sent me next day on a picnic, and all because I happened to wander into the wrong house. This is quite true, and very like our Anglo–Indian ways of doing things.

"Perhaps," said the hostess, "this will be our only fine day. Let us

spend it in a steam–launch."

Forthwith we embarked upon a new world—that of Hong–Kong harbour—and with a dramatic regard for the fitness of things our little ship was the *Pioneer*. The picnic included the new General—he that came from England in the *Nawab* and told me about Lord Wolseley—and his aide–de–camp, who was quite English and altogether different from an Indian officer. He never once talked shop, and if he had a grievance hid it behind his mustache.

The harbour is a great world in itself. Photographs say that it is lovely, and this I can believe from the glimpses caught through the mist as the *Pioneer* worked her way between the lines of junks, the tethered liners, the wallowing coal hulks, the trim, low–lying American corvette, the *Orontes*, huge and ugly, the *Cockchafer*, almost as small as its namesake, the ancient three–decker converted into a military hospital,—Thomas gets change of air thus,—and a few hundred thousand sampans manned by women with babies tied on to their backs. Then we swept down the sea face of the city and saw that it was great, till we came to an unfinished fort high up on the side of a green hill, and I watched the new General as men watch an oracle. Have I told you that he is an Engineer General, specially sent out to attend to the fortifications? He looked at the raw earth and the granite masonry, and there was keen professional interest in his eye. Perhaps he would say something. I edged nearer in that hope. He did:—

"Sherry and sandwiches? Thanks, I will. 'Stonishing how hungry the sea–air makes a man feel," quoth the General; and we went along under the grey–green coast, looking at stately country houses made of granite, where Jesuit fathers and opulent merchants dwell. It was the Mashobra of this Simla. It was also the Highlands, it was also Devonshire, and it was specially grey and chilly.

Never did *Pioneer* circulate in stranger waters. On the one side was a bewildering multiplicity of islets; on the other, the deeply indented shores of the main island, sometimes running down to the sea in little sandy coves, at others falling sheer in cliff and sea–worn cave full of the boom of the breakers. Behind, rose the hills into the mist, the everlasting mist.

"We are going to Aberdeen," said the hostess; "then to Stanley, and then across the island on foot by way of the Ti–tam reservoir. That will show you a lot of the country."

We shot into a fiord and discovered a brown fishing village which kept sentry over two docks, and a Sikh policeman. All the inhabitants were rosy–cheeked women, each owning one–third of a boat, and a whole baby, wrapped up in red cloth and tied to the back. The mother was dressed in blue for a reason,—if her husband whacked her over the shoulders, he would run a fair chance of crushing the baby's head

unless the infant were of a distinct colour.

Then we left China altogether, and steamed into far Lochaber, with a climate to correspond. Good people under the punkah, think for a moment of cloud–veiled headlands running out into a steel–grey sea, crisped with a cheek–rasping breeze that makes you sit down under the bulwarks and gasp for breath. Think of the merry pitch and roll of a small craft as it buzzes from island to island, or venturously cuts across the mouth of a mile–wide bay, while you mature amid fresh scenery, fresh talk, and fresh faces, an appetite that shall uphold the credit of the great empire in a strange land. Once more we found a village which they called Stanley; but it was different from Aberdeen. Tenantless buildings of brownstone stared seaward from the low downs, and there lay behind them a stretch of weather–beaten wall. No need to ask what these things meant. They cried aloud: "It is a deserted cantonment, and the population is in the cemetery."

I asked, "What regiment?"

"The Ninety–second, I think," said the General. "But that was in the old times—in the Sixties. I believe they quartered a lot of troops here and built the barracks on the ground; and the fever carried all the men off like flies. Isn't it a desolate place?"

My mind went back to a neglected graveyard a stone's throw from Jehangir's tomb in the gardens of Shalimar, where the cattle and the cowherd look after the last resting–places of the troops who first occupied Lahore. We are a great people and very strong, but we build Our empire in a wasteful manner—on the bones of the dead that have died of disease.

"But about the fortifications, General? Is it true that etc., etc.?"

"The fortifications are right enough as things go; what we want is men."

"How many?"

"Say about three thousand for the Island—enough to stop any expedition that might come. Look at all these little bays and coves. There are twenty places at the back of the island where you could land men and make things unpleasant for Hong–Kong."

"But," I ventured, "isn't it the theory that any organised expedition ought to be stopped by our fleet before it got here? Whereas the forts are supposed to prevent cutting out, shelling, and ransoming by a disconnected man–of–war or two."

"If you go on that theory," said the General, "the men–of–war ought to be stopped by our fleets, too. That's all nonsense. If any Power can throw troops here, you want troops to turn 'em out, and—don't we wish we may get them!"

"And you? Your command here is for five years, isn't it?"

"Oh, no! Eighteen months ought to see me out. I don't want to

stick here for ever. I've other notions for myself," said the General, scrambling over the boulders to get at his tiffin.

And that is just the worst of it. Here was a nice General helping to lay out fortifications, with one eye on Hong–Kong and the other, his right one, on England. He would be more than human not to sell himself and his orders for the command of a brigade in the next English affair. He would be afraid of being too long away from home lest he should drop out of the running and … Well, we are just the same in India, and there is not the least hope of raising a Legion of the Lost for colonial service—of men who would do their work in one place for ever and look for nothing beyond it. But remember that Hong–Kong—with five million tons of coal, five miles of shipping, docks, wharves, huge civil station, forty million pounds of trade, and the nicest picnic parties that you ever did see—wants three thousand men and—she won't get them. She has two batteries of garrison artillery, a regiment, and a lot of gun lascars—about enough to prevent the guns from rusting on their carriages. There are three forts on an island—Stonecutter's Island—between Hong–Kong and the mainland, three on Hong–Kong itself, and three or four scattered about elsewhere. Naturally the full complement of guns has not arrived. Even in India you cannot man forts without trained gunners. But tiffin under the lee of a rock was more interesting than colonial defence. A man cannot talk politics if he be empty.

Our one fine day shut in upon the empty plates in wind and rain, and the march across the island began.

As the launch was blotted out in the haze we squelched past sugar–cane crops and fat pigs, past the bleak cemetery of dead soldiers on the hill, across a section of moor, till we struck a hill–road above the sea. The views shifted and changed like a kaleidoscope. First a shaggy shoulder of land tufted with dripping rushes and naught above, beneath, or around but mist and the straight spikes of the rain; then red road swept by water that fell into the unknown; then a combe, straight walled almost as a house, at the bottom of which crawled the jade–green sea; then a vista of a bay, a bank of white sand, and a red–sailed junk beating out before the squall; then only wet rock and fern, and the voice of thunder calling from peak to peak.

A landward turn in the road brought us to the pine woods of Theog and the rhododendrons—but they called them azaleas—of Simla, and ever the rain fell as though it had been July in the hills instead of April at Hong–Kong. An invading army marching upon Victoria would have a sad time of it even if the rain did not fall. There are but one or two gaps in the hills through which it could travel, and there is a scheme in preparation whereby they shall be cut off and annihilated when they come. When I had to climb a clay hill

backwards digging my heels into the dirt, I very much pitied that invading army.

Whether the granite–faced reservoir and two–mile tunnel that supplies Hong–Kong with water be worth seeing I cannot tell. There was too much water in the air for comfort even when one tried to think of Home.

But go you and take the same walk—ten miles, and only two of 'em on level ground. Steam to the forsaken cantonment of Stanley and cross the island, and tell me whether you have seen anything so wild and wonderful in its way as the scenery. I am going up the river to Canton, and cannot stay for word–paintings.

No. X

Shows How I Came to Goblin Market and Took a Scunner at It and Cursed the Chinese People. Shows Further How I Initiated All Hong-kong Into Our Fraternity

Providence is pleased to be sarcastic. It sent rain and a raw wind from the beginning till the end. That is one of the disadvantages of leaving India. You cut yourself adrift, from the only trustworthy climate in the world. I despise a land that has to waste half its time in watching the clouds. The Canton trip (I have been that way) introduces you to the American river steamer, which is not in the least like one of the Irrawaddy flotilla or an omnibus, as many people believe. It is composed almost entirely of white paint, sheet–lead, a cow–horn, and a walking–beam, and holds about as much cargo as a P. and O. The trade between Canton and Hong–Kong seems to be immense, and a steamer covers the ninety miles between port and port daily. None the less are the Chinese passengers daily put under hatches or its equivalent after they leave port, and daily is the stand of loaded Sniders in the cabin inspected and cleaned up. Daily, too, I should imagine, the captain of each boat tells his Globe–trotting passengers the venerable story of the looting of a river steamer—how two junks fouled her at a convenient bend in the river, while the native passengers on her rose and made things very lively for the crew, and ended by clearing out that steamer. The Chinese are a strange people! They had a difficulty at Hong–Kong not very long ago about photographing labour coolies, and in the excitement, which was considerable, a rickety old war junk got into position off the bund with the avowed intention of putting a three–pound shot through the windows of the firm who had suggested the photographing. And this though vessel and crew could have been blown in cigarette–ash in ten minutes!

But no one pirated the *Ho–nam*, though the passengers did their best to set her on fire by upsetting the lamps of their opium pipes. She blared her unwieldy way across the packed shipping of the harbour and ran into grey mist and driving rain. When I say that the scenery was like the West Highlands you will by this time understand what I mean. Large screw steamers, China pig–boats very low in the water and choked with live–stock, wallowing junks and ducking sampans filled the waterways of a stream as broad as the Hughli and much better defended so far as the art of man was concerned. Their little difficulty with the French a few years ago has taught the Chinese a great many things which, perhaps, it were better for us that they had left alone.

The first striking object of Canton city is the double tower of the big Catholic Church. Take off your hat to this because it means a great deal, and stands as the visible standard of a battle that has yet to be fought. Never have the missionaries of the Mother of the Churches wrestled so mightily with any land as with China, and never has nation so scientifically tortured the missionary as has China. Perhaps when the books are audited somewhere else, each race, the White and the Yellow, will be found to have been right according to their lights.

I had taken one fair look at the city from the steamer, and threw up my cards. "I can't describe this place, and besides, I hate Chinamen."

"Bosh! It is only Benares, magnified about eight times. Come along."

It was Benares, without any wide streets or chauks, and yet darker than Benares, in that the little skyline was entirely blocked by tier on tier of hanging signs,—red, gold, black, and white. The shops stood on granite plinths, pukka brick above, and tile–roofed. Their fronts were carved wood, gilt, and coloured savagely. John knows how to dress a shop, though he may sell nothing more lovely than smashed fowl and chitterlings. Every other shop was a restaurant, and the space between them crammed with humanity. Do you know those horrible sponges full of worms that grow in warm seas? You break off a piece of it and the worms break too. Canton was that sponge. "Hi, low yah. To hoh wang!" yelled the chair–bearers to the crowd, but I was afraid that if the poles chipped the corner of a house the very bricks would begin to bleed. Hong–Kong showed me how the Chinaman could work. Canton explained why he set no value on life. The article was cheaper than in India. I hated the Chinaman before; I hated him doubly as I choked for breath in his seething streets where nothing short of the pestilence could clear a way. There was of course no incivility from the people, but the mere mob was terrifying. There are three or four places in the world where it is best for an Englishman to agree with his adversary swiftly, whatever the latter's nationality may be. Canton heads the list. Never argue with anybody in Canton. Let the guide do it for you. Then the stinks rose up and overwhelmed us. In this respect Canton was Benares twenty times magnified. The Hindu is a sanitating saint compared to the Chinaman. He is a rigid Malthusian in the same regard.

"Very bad stink, this place. You come right along," said Ah Cum, who had learned his English from Americans. He was very kind. He showed me feather–jewellery shops where men sat pinching from the gorgeous wings of jays, tiny squares of blue and lilac feathers, and pasting them into gold settings, so that the whole looked like Jeypore enamel of the rarest. But we went into a shop. Ah Cum drew us inside

the big door and bolted it, while the crowd blocked up the windows and shutter–bars. I thought more of the crowd than the jewellery. The city was so dark and the people were so very many and so unhuman.

The March of the Mongol is a pretty thing to write about in magazines. Hear it once in the gloom of an ancient curio shop, where nameless devils of the Chinese creed make mouths at you from back–shelves, where brazen dragons, revelations of uncleanliness, all catch your feet as you stumble across the floor—hear the tramp of the feet on the granite blocks of the road and the breaking wave of human speech, that is not human! "Watch the yellow faces that glare at you between the bars, and you will be afraid, as I was afraid.

"It's beautiful work," said the Professor, bending over a Cantonese petticoat—a wonder of pale green, blue, and Silver. "Now I understand why the civilised European of Irish extraction kills the Chinaman in America. It is justifiable to kill him. It would be quite right to wipe the city of Canton off the face of the earth, and to exterminate all the people who ran away from the shelling. The Chinaman ought not to count."

I had gone off on my own train of thought, and it was a black and bitter one.

"Why on earth can't you look at the lions and enjoy yourself, and leave politics to the men who pretend to understand 'em?" said the Professor.

"It's no question of politics," I replied. "This people ought to be killed off because they are unlike any people I ever met before. Look at their faces. They despise us. You can see it, and they aren't a bit afraid of us either."

Then Ah Cum took us by ways that were dark to the temple of the Five Hundred Genii, which was one of the sights of the rabbit–warren. This was a Buddhist temple with the usual accessories of altars and altar lights and colossal figures of doorkeepers at the gates. Round the inner court runs a corridor lined on both sides with figures about half life–size, representing most of the races of Asia. Several of the Jesuit Fathers are said to be in that gallery,—you can find it all in the guide–books,—and there is one image of a jolly–looking soul in a hat and full beard, but, like the others, naked to the waist. "That European gentleman," said Ah Cum. "That Marco Polo." "Make the most of him," I said. "The time is coming when there will be no European gentlemen —nothing but yellow people with black hearts—black hearts, Ah Cum —and a devil–born capacity for doing more work than they ought."

"Come and see a clock," said he. "Old clock. It runs by water. Come on right along." He took us to another temple and showed us an old water–clock of four *gurrahs*: just the same sort of thing as they have in out–of–the–way parts of India for the use of the watchmen.

The Professor vows that the machine, which is supposed to give the time to the city, is regulated by the bells of the steamers in the river, Canton water being too thick to run through anything smaller than a half–inch pipe. From the pagoda of this temple we could see that the roofs of all the houses below were covered with filled water–jars. There is no sort of fire organisation in the city. When lighted it burns till it stops.

Ah Cum led us to the Potter's Field, where the executions take place. The Chinese slay by the hundred, and far be it from me to say that such generosity of bloodshed is cruel. They could afford to execute in Canton alone at the rate of ten thousand a year without disturbing the steady flow of population. An executioner who happened to be wandering about—perhaps in search of employment—offered us a sword under guarantee that it had cut off many heads. "Keep it," I said. "Keep it, and let the good work go on. My friend, you cannot execute too freely in this land. You are blessed, I apprehend, with a purely literary bureaucracy recruited—correct me if I am wrong—from all social strata, more especially those in which the idea of cold–blooded cruelty has, as it were, become embedded. Now, when to inherited devildom is superadded a purely literary education of grim and formal tendencies, the result, my evil–looking friend,—the result, I repeat,—is a state of affairs which is faintly indicated in the Little Pilgrim's account of the Hell of Selfishness. You, I presume, have not yet read the works of the Little Pilgrim."

"He looks as if he was going to cut at you with that sword," said the Professor. "Come away and see the Temple of Horrors."

That was a sort of Chinese Madame Tussaud's—life–like models of men being brayed in mortars, sliced, fried, toasted, stuffed, and variously bedevilled—that made me sick and unhappy. But the Chinese are merciful even in their tortures. When a man is ground in a mill, he is, according to the models, popped in head first. This is hard on the crowd who are waiting to see the fun, but it saves trouble to the executioners. A half–ground man has to be carefully watched, or else he wriggles out of his place. To crown all, we went to the prison, which was a pest–house in a back street. The Professor shuddered. "It's all right," I said. "The people who sent the prisoners here don't care. The men themselves look hideously miserable, but I suppose they don't care, and goodness knows I don't care. They are only Chinamen. If they treat each other like dogs, why should we regard 'em as human beings? Let 'em rot. I want to get back to the steamer. I want to get under the guns of Hong–Kong. Phew!"

Then we ran through a succession of second–rate streets and houses till we reached the city wall on the west by a long flight of steps. It was clean here. The wall had a drop of thirty or forty feet to

paddy fields. Beyond these were a semicircle of hills, every square yard of which is planted out with graves. Her dead watch Canton the abominable, and the dead are more than the myriads living. On the grass–grown top of the wall were rusty English guns spiked and abandoned after the war. They ought not to be there. A five–storied pagoda gave us a view of the city, but I was wearied of these rats in their pit—wearied and scared and sullen. The excellent Ah Cum led us to the Viceroy's summer garden–house on the cityward slope of an azalea–covered hill surrounded by cotton trees. The basement, was a handsome joss house: upstairs was a durbar–hall with glazed verandahs and ebony furniture ranged across the room in four straight lines. It was only an oasis of cleanliness. Ten minutes later we were back in the swarming city, cut off from light and sweet air. Once or twice we met a mandarin with thin official mustache and "little red button a–top." Ah Cum was explaining the nature and properties of a mandarin when we came to a canal spanned by an English bridge and closed by an iron gate, which was in charge of a Hong–Kong policeman. We were in an Indian station with Europe shops and Parsee shops and everything else to match. This was English Canton, with two hundred and fifty sahibs in it. 'Twould have been better for a Gatling behind the bridge gate. The guide–books tell you that it was taken from the Chinese by the treaty of 1860, the French getting a similar slice of territory. Owing to the binding power of French officialism, "La concession Française" has never been let or sold to private individuals, and now a Chinese regiment squats on it. The men who travel tell you somewhat similar tales about land in Saigon and Cambodia. Something seems to attack a Frenchman as soon as he dons a colonial uniform. Let us call it the red–tape–worm.

"Now where did you go and what did you see?" said the Professor, in the style of the pedagogue, when we were once more on the *Ho–nam* and returning as fast as steam could carry us to Hong–Kong.

"A big blue sink of a city full of tunnels, all dark and inhabited by yellow devils, a city that Doré ought to have seen. I'm devoutly thankful that I'm never going back there. The Mongol will begin to march in his own good time. I intend to wait until he marches up to me. Let us go away to Japan by the next boat."

The Professor says that I have completely spoiled the foregoing account by what he calls "intemperate libels on a hard–working nation." He did not see Canton as I saw it—through the medium of a fevered imagination.

Once, before I got away, I climbed to the civil station of Hong–Kong, which overlooks the town. There in sumptuous stone villas built on the edge of the cliff and facing shaded roads, in a wilderness of beautiful flowers and a hushed calm unvexed even by the roar of the

traffic below, the residents do their best to imitate the life of an India up–country station. They are better off than we are. At the bandstand the ladies dress all in one piece—shoes, gloves, and umbrellas come out from England with the dress, and every *memsahib* knows what that means—but the mechanism of their life is much the same. In one point they are superior. The ladies have a club of their very own to which, I believe, men are only allowed to come on sufferance. At a dance there are about twenty men to one lady, and there are practically no spinsters in the island. The inhabitants complain of being cooped in and shut up. They look at the sea below them and they long to get away. They have their "At Homes" on regular days of the week, and everybody meets everybody else again and again. They have amateur theatricals and they quarrel and all the men and women take sides, and the station is cleaved asunder from the top to the bottom. Then they become reconciled and write to the local papers condemning the local critic's criticism. Isn't it touching? A lady told me these things one afternoon, and I nearly wept from sheer home–sickness.

"And then, you know, after she had said *that* he was obliged to give the part to the other, and that made *them* furious, and the races were so near that nothing could be done, and Mrs. — said that it was altogether impossible. You understand how very unpleasant it must have been, do you not?"

"Madam," said I, "I do. I have been there before. My heart goes out to Hong–Kong. In the name of the great Indian Mofussil I salute you. Henceforward Hong–Kong is one of Us, ranking before Meerut, but after Allahabad, at all public ceremonies and parades."

I think she fancied I had sunstroke; but you at any rate will know what I mean.

We do not laugh any more on the P. and O. S. S. *Ancona* on the way to Japan. We are deathly sick, because there is a cross–sea beneath us and a wet sail above. The sail is to steady the ship who refuses to be steadied. She is full of Globe–trotters who also refuse to be steadied. A Globe–trotter is extreme cosmopolitan. He will be sick anywhere.

No. XI

Of Japan at Ten Hours' Sight, Containing a Complete Account of the Manners and Customs of Its People, a History of Its Constitution, Products, Art, and Civilisation, and Omitting a Meal in a Tea-house With O-toyo - "Thou Canst Not Wave Thy Staff in Air or Dip Thy Paddle in the Lake, but It Carves the Bow of Beauty There, and Ripples in Rhyme the Oar Forsake."--emerson.

This morning, after the sorrows of the rolling night, my cabin porthole showed me two great grey rocks studded and streaked with green and crowned by two stunted blue–black pines. Below the rocks a boat, that might have been carved sandal wood for colour and delicacy, was shaking out an ivory–white frilled sail to the wind of the morning. An indigo–blue boy with an old ivory face hauled on a rope. Rock and tree and boat made a panel from a Japanese screen, and I saw that the land was not a lie. This "good brown earth" of ours has many pleasures to offer her children, but there be few in her gift comparable to the joy of touching a new country, a completely strange race, and manners contrary. Though libraries may have been written aforetime, each new beholder is to himself another Cortez. And I was in Japan—the Japan of cabinets and joinery, gracious folk and fair manners. Japan, whence the camphor and the lacquer and the shark–skin swords come: among what was it the books said?—a nation of artists. To be sure, we should only stop at Nagasaki for twelve hours ere going on to Kobé, but in twelve hours one can pack away a very fair collection of new experiences.

An execrable man met me on the deck, with a pale–blue pamphlet fifty pages thick. "Have you," said he, "seen the Constitution of Japan? The Emperor made it himself only the other day. It is on entirely European lines."

I took the pamphlet and found a complete paper Constitution stamped with the Imperial Chrysanthemum—an excellent little scheme of representation, reforms, payment of members, budget estimates, and legislation. It is a terrible thing to study at close quarters, because it is so pitifully English.

There was a yellow–shot greenness upon the hills round Nagasaki different, so my willing mind was disposed to believe, from the green of other lands. It was the green of a Japanese screen, and the pines were screen pines. The city itself hardly showed from the crowded harbour. It lay low among the hills, and its business face—a grimy bund—was sloppy and deserted. Business, I was rejoiced to learn, was at a low ebb in Nagasaki. The Japanese should have no concern with business. Close to one of the still wharves lay a ship of the Bad People;

a Russian steamer down from Vladivostok. Her decks were cumbered with raffle of all kinds; her rigging was as frowsy and draggled as the hair of a lodging–house slavey, and her sides were filthy.

"That," said a man of my people, "is a very fair specimen of a Russian. You should see their men–of–war; they are just as filthy. Some of 'em come into Nagasaki to clean."

It was a small piece of information and perhaps untrue, but it put the roof to my good humour as I stepped on to the bund and was told in faultless English by a young gentleman, with a plated chrysanthemum in his forage cap and badly fitting German uniform on his limbs, that he did not understand my language. He was a Japanese customs official. Had our stay been longer, I would have wept over him because he was a hybrid—partly French, partly German, and partly American—a tribute to civilisation. All the Japanese officials from police upwards seem to be clad in Europe clothes, and never do those clothes fit. I think the Mikado made them at the same time as the Constitution. They will come right in time.

When the 'rickshaw, drawn by a beautiful apple–cheeked young man with a Basque face, shot me into the *Mikado*, First Act, I did not stop and shout with delight, because the dignity of India was in my keeping. I lay back on the velvet cushions and grinned luxuriously at Pittising, with her sash and three giant hair–pins in her blue–black hair, and three–inch clogs on her feet. She laughed—even as did the Burmese girl in the old Pagoda at Moulmein. And her laugh, the laugh of a lady, was my welcome to Japan. Can the people help laughing? I think not. You see they have such thousands of children in their streets that the elders must perforce be young lest the babes should grieve. Nagasaki is inhabited entirely by children. The grown–ups exist on sufferance. A four–foot child walks with a three–foot child, who is holding the hand of a two–foot child, who carries on her back a one–foot child, who—but you will not believe me if I say that the scale runs down to six–inch little Jap dolls such as they used to sell in the Burlington Arcade. These dolls wriggle and laugh. They are tied up in a blue bed–gown which is tied by a sash, which again ties up the bed–gown of the carrier. Thus if you untie that sash, baby and but little bigger brother are at once perfectly naked. I saw a mother do this, and it was for all the world like the peeling of hard–boiled eggs.

If you look for extravagance of colour, for flaming shop fronts and glaring lanterns, you shall find none of these things in the narrow stone–paved streets of Nagasaki. But if you desire details of house construction, glimpses of perfect cleanliness, rare taste, and perfect subordination of the thing made to the needs of the maker, you shall find all you seek and more. All the roofs are dull lead colour, being shingled or tiled, and all the house fronts are of the colour of the

wood as God made it. There is neither smoke nor haze, and in the clear light of a clouded sky I could see down the narrowest alleyway as into the interior of a cabinet.

The books have long ago told you how a Japanese house is constructed, chiefly of sliding screens and paper partitions, and everybody knows the story of the burglar of Tokio who burgled with a pair of scissors for jimmy and centrebit and stole the Consul's trousers. But all the telling in print will never make you understand the exquisite finish of a tenement that you could kick in with your foot and pound to match–wood with your fists. Behold a *bunnia's*[9] shop. He sells rice and chillies and dried fish and wooden scoops made of bamboo. The front of his shop is very solid. It is made of half–inch battens nailed side by side. Not one of the battens is broken; and each one is foursquare perfectly. Feeling ashamed of himself for this surly barring up of his house, he fills one–half the frontage with oiled paper stretched upon quarter–inch framing. Not a single square of oil paper has a hole in it, and not one of the squares, which in more uncivilised countries would hold a pane of glass if strong enough, is out of line. And the *bunnia*, clothed in a blue dressing–gown, with thick white stockings on his feet, sits behind, not among his wares, on a pale gold–coloured mat of soft rice straw bound with black list at the edges. This mat is two inches thick, three feet wide and six long. You might, if you were a sufficient pig, eat your dinner off any portion of it. The *bunnia* lies with one wadded blue arm round a big brazier of hammered brass on which is faintly delineated in incised lines a very terrible dragon. The brazier is full of charcoal ash, but there is no ash on the mat. By the *bunnia's* side is a pouch of green leather tied with a red silk cord, holding tobacco cut fine as cotton. He fills a long black and red lacquered pipe, lights it at the charcoal in the brazier, takes two whiffs, and the pipe is empty. Still there is no speck on the mat. Behind the *bunnia* is a shadow–screen of bead and bamboo. This veils a room floored with pale gold and roofed with panels of grained cedar. There is nothing in the room save a blood–red blanket laid out smoothly as a sheet of paper. Beyond the room is a passage of polished wood, so polished that it gives back the reflections of the white paper wall. At the end of the passage and clearly visible to this unique *bunnia* is a dwarfed pine two feet high in a green glazed pot, and by its side is a branch of azalea, blood red as the blanket, set in a pale grey crackle–pot. The *bunnia* has put it there for his own pleasure, for the delight of his eyes, because he loves it. The white man has nothing whatever to do with his tastes, and he keeps his house specklessly pure because he likes cleanliness and knows it is artistic. What shall we say to such a *bunnia*?

His brother in Northern India may live behind a front of time–

blackened open–work wood, but … I do not think he would grow anything save *tulsi*[10] in a pot, and that only to please the Gods and his womenfolk.

Let us not compare the two men, but go on through Nagasaki.

Except for the horrible policemen who insist on being Continental, the people—the common people, that is—do not run after unseemly costumes of the West. The young men wear round felt hats, occasionally coats and trousers, and semi–occasionally boots. All these are vile. In the more metropolitan towns men say Western dress is rather the rule than the exception. If this be so, I am disposed to conclude that the sins of their forefathers in making enterprising Jesuit missionaries into beefsteak have been visited on the Japanese in the shape of a partial obscuration of their artistic instincts. Yet the punishment seems rather too heavy for the offence.

Then I fell admiring the bloom on the people's cheeks, the three–cornered smiles of the fat babes, and the surpassing "otherness" of everything round me. It is so strange to be in a clean land, and stranger to walk among doll's houses. Japan is a soothing place for a small man. Nobody comes to tower over him, and he looks down upon all the women, as is right and proper. A dealer in curiosities bent himself double on his own door–mat, and I passed in, feeling for the first time that I was a barbarian, and no true Sahib. The slush of the streets was thick on my boots, and he, the immaculate owner, asked me to walk across a polished floor and white mats to an inner chamber. He brought me a foot–mat, which only made matters worse, for a pretty girl giggled round the corner as I toiled at it. Japanese shopkeepers ought not to be so clean. I went into a boarded passage about two feet wide, found a gem of a garden of dwarfed trees, in the space of half a tennis court, whacked my head on a fragile lintel, and arrived at a four–walled daintiness where I involuntarily lowered my voice. Do you recollect Mrs. Molesworth's *Cuckoo Clock*, and the big cabinet that Griselda entered with the cuckoo? I was not Griselda, but my low–voiced friend, in his long, soft wraps, was the cuckoo, and the room was the cabinet. Again I tried to console myself with the thought that I could kick the place to pieces; but this only made me feel large and coarse and dirty,—a most unfavourable mood for bargaining. The cuckoo–man caused pale tea to be brought,—just such tea as you read of in books of travel,—and the tea completed my embarrassment. What I wanted to say was, "Look here, you person. You're much too clean and refined for this life here below, and your house is unfit for a man to live in until he has been taught a lot of things which I have never learned. Consequently I hate you because I feel myself your inferior, and you despise me and my boots because you know me for a savage. Let me go, or I'll pull your house of cedar–wood over your

ears." What I really said was, "Oh, ah yes. Awf'ly pretty. Awful queer way of doing business."

The cuckoo–man proved to be a horrid extortioner; but I was hot and uncomfortable till I got outside, and was a bog–trotting Briton once more. You have never blundered into the inside of a three–hundred–dollar cabinet, therefore you will not understand me.

We came to the foot of a hill, as it might have been the hill on which the Shway Dagon stands, and up that hill ran a mighty flight of grey, weather–darkened steps, spanned here and there by monolithic *torii*. Every one knows what a *torii* is. They have them in Southern India. A great King makes a note of the place where he intends to build a huge arch, but being a King does so in stone, not ink—sketches in the air two beams and a cross–bar, forty or sixty feet high, and twenty or thirty wide. In Southern India the cross–bar is humped in the middle. In the Further East it flares up at the ends. This description is hardly according to the books, but if a man begins by consulting books in a new country he is lost. Over the steps hung heavy blue–green or green–black pines, old, gnarled, and bossed. The foliage of the hillside was a lighter green, but the pines set the keynote of colour, and the blue dresses of the few folk on the steps answered it. There was no sunshine in the air, but I vow that sunshine would have spoilt all. We climb for five minutes,—I and the Professor and the camera,—and then we turned, and saw the roofs of Nagasaki lying at our feet—a sea of lead and dull–brown, with here and there a smudge of creamy pink to mark the bloom of the cherry trees. The hills round the town were speckled with the resting–places of the dead, with clumps of pine and feathery bamboo.

"What a country!" said the Professor, unstrapping his camera. "And have you noticed, wherever we go there's always some man who knows how to carry my kit? The *gharri* driver at Moulmein handed me my stops; the fellow at Penang knew all about it, too; and the 'rickshaw coolie has seen a camera before. Curious, isn't it?"

"Professor," said I, "it's due to the extraordinary fact that we are not the only people in the world. I began to realise it at Hong–Kong. It's getting plainer now. I shouldn't be surprised if we turned out to be ordinary human beings, after all."

We entered a courtyard where an evil–looking bronze horse stared at two stone lions, and a company of children babbled among themselves. There is a legend connected with the bronze horse, which may be found in the guide–books. But the real true story of the creature is that he was made long ago out of the fossil ivory of Siberia by a Japanese Prometheus, and got life and many foals, whose descendants closely resemble their father. Long years have almost eliminated the ivory in the blood, but it crops out in creamy mane and

tail; and the pot–belly and marvellous feet of the bronze horse may be found to this day among the pack–ponies of Nagasaki, who carry pack–saddles adorned with velvet and red cloth, who wear grass shoes on their hind feet, and who are made like to horses in a pantomime.

We could not go beyond this courtyard because a label said, "No admittance," and thus all we saw of the temple was rich–brown high roofs of blackened thatch, breaking back and back in wave and undulation till they were lost in the foliage. The Japanese can play with thatch as men play with modelling clay, but how their light underpinnings can carry the weight of the roof is a mystery to the lay eye.

We went down the steps to tiffin, and a half–formed resolve was shaping itself in my heart the while. Burma was a very nice place, but they eat *gnapi* there, and there were smells, and after all, the girls weren't so pretty as some others—

"You must take off your boots," said Y–Tokai.

I assure you there is no dignity in sitting down on the steps of a tea–house and struggling with muddy boots. And it is impossible to be polite in your stockinged feet when the floor under you is as smooth as glass and a pretty girl wants to know where you would like tiffin. Take at least one pair of beautiful socks with you when you come this way. Get them made of embroidered *sambhur* skin, of silk if you like; but do not stand as I did in cheap striped brown things with a darn at the heel, and try to talk to a tea–girl.

They led us—three of them and all fresh and pretty—into a room furnished with a golden–brown bearskin. The *tokonoma*, recess aforementioned, held one scroll–picture of bats wheeling in the twilight, a bamboo flower–holder, and yellow flowers. The ceiling was of panelled wood, with the exception of one strip at the side nearest the window, and this was made of plaited shavings of cedar–wood, marked off from the rest of the ceiling by a wine–brown bamboo so polished that it might have been lacquered. A touch of the hand sent one side of the room flying back, and we entered a really large room with another *tokonoma* framed on one side by eight or ten feet of an unknown wood, bearing the same grain as a Penang lawyer, and above by a stick of unbarked tree set there purely because it was curiously mottled. In this second *tokonoma* was a pearl–grey vase, and that was all. Two sides of the room were of oiled paper, and the joints of the beams were covered by the brazen images of crabs, half life–size. Save for the sill of the *tokonoma*, which was black lacquer, every inch of wood in the place was natural grain without flaw. Outside was the garden, fringed with a hedge of dwarf–pines and adorned with a tiny pond, water–smoothed stones sunk in the soil, and a blossoming cherry tree.

They left us alone in this paradise of cleanliness and beauty, and being only a shameless Englishman without his boots—a white man is always degraded when he goes barefoot—I wandered round the wall, trying all the screens. It was only when I stooped to examine the sunk catch of a screen that I saw it was a plaque of inlay work representing two white cranes feeding on fish. The whole was about three inches square and in the ordinary course of events would never be looked at. The screens hid a cupboard in which all the lamps and candlesticks and pillows and sleeping–bags of the household seemed to be stored. An Oriental nation that can fill a cupboard tidily is a nation to bow down to. Upstairs I went by a staircase of grained wood and lacquer, into rooms of rarest device with circular windows that opened on nothing, and so were filled with bamboo tracery for the delight of the eye. The passages floored with dark wood shone like ice, and I was ashamed.

"Professor," said I, "they don't spit; they don't eat like pigs; they can't quarrel, and a drunken man would reel straight through every portion in the house and roll down the hill into Nagasaki. They can't have any children." Here I stopped. Downstairs was full of babies.

The maidens came in with tea in blue china and cake in a red lacquered bowl—such cake as one gets at one or two houses in Simla. We sprawled ungracefully on red rugs over the mats, and they gave us chopsticks to separate the cake with. It was a long task.

"Is that all?" growled the Professor. "I'm hungry, and cake and tea oughtn't to come till four o'clock." Here he took a wedge of cake furtively with his hands.

They returned—five of them this time—with black lacquer stands a foot square and four inches high. Those were our tables. They bore a red lacquered bowlful of fish boiled in brine, and sea–anemones. At least they were not mushrooms. A paper napkin tied with gold thread enclosed our chopsticks; and in a little flat saucer lay a smoked crayfish, a slice of a compromise that looked like Yorkshire pudding and tasted like sweet omelette, and a twisted fragment of some translucent thing that had once been alive but was now pickled. They went away, but not empty handed, for thou, oh, O–Toyo, didst take away my heart—same which I gave to the Burmese girl in the Shway Dagon pagoda!

The Professor opened his eyes a little, but said no word. The chopsticks demanded all his attention, and the return of the girls took up the rest. O–Toyo, ebon–haired, rosy–cheeked, and made throughout of delicate porcelain, laughed at me because I devoured all the mustard sauce that had been served with my raw fish, and wept copiously till she gave me *saki* from a lordly bottle about four inches high. If you took some very thin hock, and tried to mull it and forgot

all about the brew till it was half cold, you would get *saki*. I had mine in a saucer so tiny that I was bold to have it filled eight or ten times and loved O–Toyo none the less at the end.

After raw fish and mustard sauce came some other sort of fish cooked with pickled radishes, and very slippery on the chopsticks. The girls knelt in a semicircle and shrieked with delight at the Professor's clumsiness, for indeed it was not I that nearly upset the dinner table in a vain attempt to recline gracefully. After the bamboo–shoots came a basin of white beans in sweet sauce—very tasty indeed. Try to convey beans to your mouth with a pair of wooden knitting–needles and see what happens. Some chicken cunningly boiled with turnips, and a bowlful of snow–white boneless fish and a pile of rice, concluded the meal. I have forgotten one or two of the courses, but when O–Toyo handed me the tiny lacquered Japanese pipe full of hay–like tobacco, I counted nine dishes in the lacquer stand—each dish representing a course. Then O–Toyo and I smoked by alternate pipefuls.

My very respectable friends at all the clubs and messes, have you ever after a good tiffin lolled on cushions and smoked, with one pretty girl to fill your pipe and four to admire you in an unknown tongue? You do not know what life is. I looked round me at that faultless room, at the dwarf pines and creamy cherry blossoms without, at O–Toyo bubbling with laughter because I blew smoke through my nose, and at the ring of *Mikado* maidens over against the golden–brown bearskin rug. Here was colour, form, food, comfort, and beauty enough for half a year's contemplation. I would not be a Burman any more. I would be a Japanese—always with O–Toyo—in a cabinet workhouse on a camphor–scented hillside.

"Heigho!" said the Professor. "There are worse places than this to live and die in. D'you know our steamer goes at four? Let's ask for the bill and get away."

Now I have left my heart with O–Toyo under the pines. Perhaps I shall get it back at Kobé.

No. XII

A Further Consideration of Japan. the Inland Sea, and Good Cookery. the Mystery of Passports and Consulates, and Certain Other Matters - "Rome! Rome! Wasn't That the Place Where I Got the Good Cigars?" - --memoirs of a Traveller.

Alas for the incompleteness of the written word! There was so much more that I meant to tell you about Nagasaki and the funeral procession that I found in her streets. You ought to have read about the wailing women in white who followed the dead man shut up in a wooden sedan chair that rocked on the shoulders of the bearers, while the bronze–hued Buddhist priest tramped on ahead, and the little boys ran alongside.

I had prepared in my mind moral reflections, purviews of political situations, and a complete essay on the future of Japan. Now I have forgotten everything except O–Toyo in the tea–garden.

From Nagasaki we—the P. and O. Steamer—are going to Kobé by way of the Inland Sea. That is to say, we have for the last twenty hours been steaming through a huge lake, studded as far as the eye can reach with islands of every size, from four miles long and two wide to little cocked–hat hummocks no bigger than a decent hayrick. Messrs. Cook and Son charge about one hundred rupees extra for the run through this part of the world, but they do not know how to farm the beauties of nature. Under any skies the islands—purple, amber, grey, green, and black—are worth five times the money asked. I have been sitting for the last half–hour among a knot of whooping tourists, wondering how I could give you a notion of them. The tourists, of course, are indescribable. They say, "Oh my!" at thirty–second intervals, and at the end of five minutes call one to another: "Sa–ay, don't you think it's vurry much the same all along?" Then they play cricket with a broomstick till an unusually fair prospect makes them stop and shout "Oh my!" again. If there were a few more oaks and pines on the islands, the run would be three hundred miles of Naini Tal lake. But we are not near Naini Tal; for as the big ship drives down the alleys of water, I can see the heads of the breakers flying ten feet up the side of the echoing cliffs, albeit the sea is dead–still.

Now we have come to a stretch so densely populated with islands that all looks solid ground. We are running through broken water thrown up by the race of the tide round an outlying reef, and apparently are going to hit an acre of solid rock. Somebody on the bridge saves us, and we head out for another island, and so on, and so on, till the eye wearies of watching the nose of the ship swinging right and left, and the finite human soul, which, after all, cannot repeat "Oh

my!" through a chilly evening, goes below. When you come to Japan —it can be done comfortably in three months, or even ten weeks—sail through this marvellous sea, and see how quickly wonder sinks to interest, and interest to apathy. We brought oysters with us from Nagasaki. I am much more interested in their appearance at dinner to–night than in the shag–backed starfish of an islet that has just slidden by like a ghost upon the silver–grey waters, awakening under the touch of the ripe moon. Yes, it is a sea of mystery and romance, and the white sails of the junks are silver in the moonlight. But if the steward curries those oysters instead of serving them on the shell, all the veiled beauties of cliff and water–carven rock will not console me. To–day being the seventeenth of April, I am sitting in an ulster under a thick rug, with fingers so cold I can barely hold the pen. This emboldens me to ask how your thermantidotes are working. A mixture of steatite and kerosene is very good for creaking cranks, I believe, and if the coolie falls asleep, and you wake up in Hades, try not to lose your temper. I go to my oysters.

Two days later. This comes from Kobé (thirty hours from Nagasaki), the European portion of which is a raw American town. We walked down the wide, naked streets between houses of sham stucco, with Corinthian pillars of wood, wooden verandahs and piazzas, all stony grey beneath stony grey skies, and keeping guard over raw green saplings miscalled shade trees. In truth, Kobé is hideously American in externals. Even I, who have only seen pictures of America, recognised at once that it was Portland, Maine. It lives among hills, but the hills are all scalped, and the general impression is of out–of–the–wayness. Yet, ere I go further, let me sing the praises of the excellent M. Begeux, proprietor of the Oriental Hotel, upon whom be peace. His is a house where you can dine. He does not merely feed you. His coffee is the coffee of the beautiful France. For tea he gives you Peliti cakes (but better) and the *vin ordinaire* which is *compris*, is good. Excellent Monsieur and Madame Begeux! If the *Pioneer* were a medium for puffs, I would write a leading article upon your potato salad, your beefsteaks, your fried fish, and your staff of highly trained Japanese servants in blue tights, who looked like so many small Hamlets without the velvet cloak, and who obeyed the unspoken wish. No, it should be a poem—a ballad of good living. I have eaten curries of the rarest at the Oriental at Penang, the turtle steaks of Raffles's at Singapur still live in my regretful memory, and they gave me chicken liver and sucking–pig in the Victoria at Hong–Kong which I will always extol. But the Oriental at Kobé was better than all three. Remember this, and so shall you who come after slide round a quarter of the world upon a sleek and contented stomach.

We are going from Kobé to Yokohama by various roads. This

necessitates a passport, because we travel in the interior and do not run round the coast on shipboard. We take a railroad, which may or may not be complete as to the middle, and we branch off from that railroad, complete or not, as the notion may prompt. This will be an affair of some twenty days, and ought to include forty or fifty miles by 'rickshaw, a voyage on a lake, and, I believe, bedbugs. *Nota bene.*—When you come to Japan stop at Hong–Kong and send on a letter to the "Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at Tokio," if you want to travel in the interior of this Fairyland. Indicate your route as roughly as ever you choose, but for your own comfort give the two extreme towns you intend to touch. Throw in any details about your age, profession, colour of hair, and the like that may occur to you, and ask to have a passport sent to the British Consulate at Kobé to meet you. Allow the man with a long title a week's time to prepare the passport, and you will find it at your service when you land. Only write distinctly, to save your vanity. My papers are addressed to a Mister Kyshrig—Radjerd Kyshrig.

As in Nagasaki, the town was full of babies, and as in Nagasaki, every one smiled except the Chinamen. I do not like Chinamen. There was something in their faces which I could not understand, though it was familiar enough.

"The Chinaman's a native," I said. "That's the look on a native's face, but the Jap isn't a native, and he isn't a sahib either. What is it?" The Professor considered the surging street for a while.

"The Chinaman's an old man when he's young, just as a native is, but the Jap is a child all his life. Think how grown–up people look among children. That's the look that's puzzling you."

I dare not say that the Professor is right, but to my eyes it seemed he spoke sooth. As the knowledge of good and evil sets its mark upon the face of a grown man of Our people, so something I did not understand had marked the faces of the Chinamen. They had no kinship with the crowd beyond that which a man has to children.

"They are the superior race," said the Professor, ethnologically.

"They can't be. They don't know how to enjoy life," I answered immorally. "And, anyway, their art isn't human."

"What does it matter?" said the Professor. "Here's a shop full of the wrecks of old Japan. Let's go in and look." We went in, but I want somebody to solve the Chinese question for me. It's too large to handle alone.

We entered the curio–shop aforementioned, with our hats in our hands, through a small avenue of carved stone lanterns and wooden sculptures of devils unspeakably hideous, to be received by a smiling image who had grown grey among *netsukes* and lacquer. He showed us the banners and insignia of daimios long since dead, while our jaws

drooped in ignorant wonder. He showed us a sacred turtle of mammoth size, carven in wood down to minutest detail. Through room after room he led us, the light fading as we went, till we reached a tiny garden and a woodwork cloister that ran round it. Suits of old–time armour made faces at us in the gloom, ancient swords clicked at our feet, quaint tobacco pouches as old as the swords swayed to and fro from some invisible support, and the eyes of a score of battered Buddhas, red dragons, Jain *tirthankars*, and Burmese *beloos* glared at us from over the fence of tattered gold brocade robes of state. The joy of possession lives in the eye. The old man showed us his treasures, from crystal spheres mounted in sea–worn wood to cabinet on cabinet full of ivory and wood carvings, and we were as rich as though we owned all that lay before us. Unfortunately the merest scratch of Japanese characters is the only clew to the artist's name, so I am unable to say who conceived, and in creamy ivory executed, the old man horribly embarrassed by a cuttle–fish; the priest who made the soldier pick up a deer for him and laughed to think that the brisket would be his and the burden his companion's; or the dry, lean snake coiled in derision on a jawless skull mottled with the memories of corruption; or the Rabelaisan badger who stood on his head and made you blush though he was not half an inch long; or the little fat boy pounding his smaller brother; or the rabbit that had just made a joke; or—but there were scores of these notes, born of every mood of mirth, scorn, and experience that sways the heart of man; and by this hand that has held half a dozen of them in its palm I winked at the shade of the dead carver! He had gone to his rest, but he had worked out in ivory three or four impressions that I had been hunting after in cold print.

The Englishman is a wonderful animal. He buys a dozen of these things and puts them on the top of an overcrowded cabinet, where they look like blobs of ivory, and forgets them in a week. The Japanese hides them in a beautiful brocaded bag or a quiet lacquer box till three congenial friends come to tea. Then he takes them out slowly, and they are looked over with appreciation amid quiet chuckles to the deliberative clink of cups, and put back again till the mood for inspection returns. That is the way to enjoy what we call curios. Every man with money is a collector in Japan, but you shall find no crowds of "things" outside the best shops.

We stayed long in the half–light of that quaint place, and when we went away we grieved afresh that such a people should have a "constitution" or should dress every tenth young man in European clothes, put a white ironclad in Kobé harbour, and send a dozen myoptic lieutenants in baggy uniforms about the streets.

"It would pay us," said the Professor, his head in a clog–shop, "it

would pay us to establish an international suzerainty over Japan to take, away any fear of invasion or annexation, and pay the country as much as ever it chose, on condition that it simply sat still and went on making beautiful things while our men learned. It would pay us to put the whole Empire in a glass case and mark it, '*Hors concours*,' Exhibit A."

"H'mm," said I. "Who's us?"

"Oh, we generally—the *Sahib log* all the world over. Our workmen—a few of them—can do as good work in certain lines, but you don't find whole towns full of clean, capable, dainty, designful people in Europe."

"Let's go to Tokio and speak to the Emperor about it," I said.

"Let's go to a Japanese theatre first," said the Professor. "It's too early in the tour to start serious politics."

No. XIII

The Japanese Theatre and the Story of the Thunder Cat. Treating Also of the Quiet Places and the Dead Man in the Street

To the theatre we went, through the mud and much rain. Internally it was nearly dark, for the deep blue of the audience's dress soaked up the scanty light of the kerosene lamps. There was no standing room anywhere except next to the Japanese policeman, who in the cause of morals and the Lord Chamberlain had a corner in the gallery and four chairs all to himself. He was quite four feet eight inches high, and Napoleon at St. Helena could not have folded his arms more dramatically. After some grunting—I fear we were upsetting the principles of the Constitution—he consented to give us one chair, receiving in return a Burma cheroot which I have every reason to believe blew his little head off. A pit containing fifty rows of fifty people and a bonding layer of babies, with a gallery which might have held twelve hundred, made up the house. The building was as delicate a piece of cabinet work as any of the houses; roof, floor, beams, props, verandahs, and partitions were of naked wood, and every other person in the house was smoking a tiny pipe and knocking out the ashes every two minutes. Then I wished to fly; death by the *auto da fe* not being anywhere paid for in the tour; but there was no escape by the one little door where pickled fish was being sold between the acts.

"Yes, it's not exactly safe," said the Professor, as the matches winked and sputtered all round and below. "But if that curtain catches that naked light on the stage, or you see this matchwood gallery begin to blaze, I'll kick out the back of the refreshment buffet, and we can walk away."

With this warm comfort the drama began. The green curtain dropped from above and was whisked away, and three gentlemen and a lady opened the ball by a dialogue conducted in tones between a "burble" and a falsetto whisper. If you wish to know their costumes, look at the nearest Japanese fan. Real Japs of course are like men and women, but stage Japs in their stiff brocades are line for line as Japs are drawn. When the four sat down, a little boy ran among them and settled their draperies, pulling out a sash bow here, displaying a skirt–fold there. The costumes were as gorgeous as the plot was incomprehensible. But we will call the play "*The Thunder Cat*, or *Harlequin Bag o' Bones and the Amazing Old Woman*, or *The Mammoth Radish*, or *The Superfluous Badger and the Swinging Lights*."

A two–sworded man in the black and gold brocade rose up and imitated the gait of an obscure actor called Henry Irving, whereat, not

knowing that he was serious, I cackled aloud till the Japanese policeman looked at me austerely. Then the two–sworded man wooed the Japanese–fan lady, the other characters commenting on his proceedings like a Greek chorus till something—perhaps a misplaced accent—provoked trouble, and the two–sworded man and a vermilion splendour enjoyed a Vincent Crummles fight to the music of all the orchestra—one guitar and something that clicked—not castanets. The small boy removed their weapons when the men had sufficiently warred, and, conceiving that the piece wanted light, fetched a ten–foot bamboo with a naked candle at the end, and held this implement about a foot from the face of the two–sworded man, following his every movement with the anxious eye of a child intrusted with a typewriter. Then the Japanese–fan girl consented to the wooing of the two–sworded man, and with a scream of eldritch laughter turned into a hideous old woman—a boy took off her hair, but she did the rest herself. At this terrible moment a gilded Thunder Cat, which is a cat issuing from a cloud, ran on wires from the flies to the centre of the gallery, and a boy with a badger's tail mocked at the two–sworded man. Then I knew that the two–sworded man had offended a cat and a badger, and would have a very bad time of it, for these two animals and the fox are to this day black sorcerers. Fearful things followed, and the scenery was changed once every five minutes. The prettiest effect was secured by a double row of candles hung on strings behind a green gauze far up the stage and set swinging with opposite motions. This, besides giving a fine idea of uncanniness, made one member of the audience sea–sick.

But the two–sworded man was far more miserable than I. The bad Thunder Cat cast such spells upon him that I gave up trying to find out what he meant to be. He was a fat–faced low comedian King of the Rats, assisted by other rats, and he ate a magic radish with side–splitting pantomime till he became a man once more. Then all his bones were taken away,—still by the Thunder Cat,—and he fell into a horrid heap, illuminated by the small boy with the candle—and would not recover himself till somebody spoke to a magic parrot, and a huge hairy villain and several coolies had walked over him. Then he was a girl, but, hiding behind a parasol, resumed his shape, and then the curtain came down and the audience ran about the stage and circulated generally. One small boy took it into his head that he could turn head–over–heels from the Prompt side across. With great gravity, before the unregarding house, he set to work; but rolled over sideways with a flourish of chubby legs. Nobody cared, and the polite people in the gallery could not understand why the Professor and I were helpless with laughter when the child, with a clog for a sword, imitated the strut of the two–sworded man. The actors changed in

public, and any one who liked might help shift scenes. Why should not a baby enjoy himself if he liked?

A little later we left. The Thunder Cat was still working her wicked will on the two–sworded man, but all would be set right next day. There was a good deal to be done, but Justice was at the end of it. The man who sold pickled fish and tickets said so.

"Good school for a young actor," said the Professor. "He'd see what unpruned eccentricities naturally develop into. There's every trick and mannerism of the English stage in that place, magnified thirty diameters, but perfectly recognisable. How do you intend to describe it?"

"The Japanese comic opera of the future has yet to be written," I responded, grandiloquently. "Yet to be written in spite of the *Mikado*. The badger has not yet appeared on an English stage, and the artistic mask as an accessory to the legitimate drama has never been utilised. Just imagine the *Thunder Cat* as a title for a serio–comic opera. Begin with a domestic cat possessed of magic powers, living in the house of a London tea–merchant who kicks her. Consider—"

"The lateness of the hour," was the icy answer. "To–morrow we will go and write operas in the temple close to this place."

* * * * *

To–morrow brought fine drizzling rain. The sun, by the way, has been hidden now for more than three weeks. They took us to what must be the chief temple of Kobé and gave it a name which I do not remember. It is an exasperating thing to stand at the altars of a faith that you know nothing about. There be rites and ceremonies of the Hindu creed that all have read of and must have witnessed, but in what manner do they pray here who look to Buddha, and what worship is paid at the Shinto shrines? The books say one thing; the eyes, another.

The temple would seem to be also a monastery and a place of great peace disturbed only by the babble of scores of little children. It stood back from the road behind a sturdy wall, an irregular mass of steep pitched roofs bound fantastically at the crown, copper–green where the thatch had ripened under the touch of time, and dull grey–black where the tiles ran. Under the eaves a man who believed in his God, and so could do good work, had carved his heart into wood till it blossomed and broke into waves or curled with the ripple of live flames. Somewhere on the outskirts of Lahore city stands a mazy gathering of tombs and cloister walks called Chajju Bhagat's Chubara, built no one knows when and decaying no one cares how soon.

Though this temple was large and spotlessly clean within and without, the silence and rest of the place were those of the courtyards in the far–off Punjab. The priests had made many gardens in corners of the wall—gardens perhaps forty feet long by twenty wide, and each, though different from its neighbour, containing a little pond with goldfish, a stone lantern or two, hummocks of rock, flat stones carved with inscriptions, and a cherry or peach tree all blossom.

Stone–paved paths ran across the courtyard and connected building with building. In an inner enclosure, where lay the prettiest garden of all, was a golden tablet ten or twelve feet high, against which stood in high relief of hammered bronze the figure of a goddess in flowing robes. The space between the paved paths here was strewn with snowy–white pebbles, and in white pebbles on red they had written on the ground, "How happy." You might take them as you pleased—for the sigh of contentment or the question of despair.

The temple itself, reached by a wooden bridge, was nearly dark, but there was light enough to show a hundred subdued splendours of brown and gold, of silk and faithfully painted screen. If you have once seen a Buddhist altar where the Master of the Law sits among golden bells, ancient bronzes, flowers in vases, and banners of tapestry, you will begin to understand why the Roman Catholic Church once prospered so mightily in this country, and will prosper in all lands where it finds an elaborate ritual already existing. An art–loving folk will have a God who is to be propitiated with pretty things as surely as a race bred among rocks and moors and driving clouds will enshrine their deity in the storm, and make him the austere recipient of the sacrifice of the rebellious human spirit. Do you remember the story of the Bad People of Iquique? The man who told me that yarn told me another—of the Good People of Somewhere Else. They also were simple South Americans with nothing to wear, and had been conducting a service of their own in honour of their God before a black–jowled Jesuit father. At a critical moment some one forgot the ritual, or a monkey invaded the sanctity of that forest shrine and stole the priest's only garment. Anyhow, an absurdity happened, and the Good People burst into shouts of laughter and broke off to play for a while.

"But what will your God say?" asked the Jesuit, scandalised at the levity.

"Oh! he knows everything. He knows that we forget, and can't attend, and do it all wrong, but He is very wise and very strong," was the reply.

"Well, that doesn't excuse you."

"Of course it does. He just lies back and laughs," said the Good People of Somewhere Else, and fell to pelting each other with

blossoms.

I forget what is the precise bearing of this anecdote. But to return to the temple. Hidden away behind a mass of variegated gorgeousness was a row of very familiar figures with gold crowns on their heads. One does not expect to meet Krishna the Butter Thief and Kali the husband beater so far east as Japan.

"What are these?"

"They are other gods," said a young priest, who giggled deprecatingly at his own creed every time he was questioned about it. "They are very old. They came from India in the past. I think they are Indian gods, but I do not know why they are here."

I hate a man who is ashamed of his faith. There was a story connected with those gods, and the priest would not tell it to me. So I sniffed at him scornfully, and went my way. It led me from the temple straight into the monastery, which was all made of delicate screens, polished floors, and brown wood ceilings. Except for my tread on the boards there was no sound in the place till I heard some one breathing heavily behind a screen. The priest slid back what had appeared to me a dead wall, and we found a very old priest half–asleep over his charcoal handwarmer. This was the picture. The priest in olive–green, his bald head, pure silver, bowed down before a sliding screen of white oiled paper which let in dull silver light. To his right a battered black lacquer stand containing the Indian ink and brushes with which he feigned to work. To the right of these, again, a pale yellow bamboo table holding a vase of olive–green crackle, and a sprig of almost black pine. There were no blossoms in this place. The priest was too old. Behind the sombre picture stood a gorgeous little Buddhist shrine,—gold and vermilion.

"He makes a fresh picture for the little screen here every day," said the young priest, pointing first to his senior, and then to a blank little tablet on the wall. The old man laughed pitifully, rubbed his head, and handed me his picture for the day. It represented a flood over rocky ground; two men in a boat were helping two others on a tree half–submerged by the water. Even I could tell that the power had gone from him. He must have drawn well in his manhood, for one figure in the boat had action and purpose as it leaned over the gunwale; but the rest was blurred, and the lines had wandered astray as the poor old hand had quavered across the paper. I had no time to wish the artist a pleasant old age, and an easy death in the great peace that surrounded him, before the young man drew me away to the back of the shrine, and showed me a second smaller altar facing shelves on shelves of little gold and lacquer tablets covered with Japanese characters.

"These are memorial tablets of the dead," he giggled. "Once and

again the priest he prays here—for those who are dead, you understand?"

"Perfectly. They call 'em masses where I come from. I want to go away and think about things. You shouldn't laugh, though, when you show off your creed."

"Ha, ha!" said the young priest, and I ran away down the dark polished passages with the faded screens on either hand, and got into the main courtyard facing the street, while the Professor was trying to catch temple fronts with his camera.

A procession passed, four abreast tramping through the sloshy mud. They did not laugh, which was strange, till I saw and heard a company of women in white walking in front of a little wooden palanquin carried on the shoulders of four bearers and suspiciously light. They sang a song, half under their breaths—a wailing, moaning song that I had only heard once before, from the lips of a native far away in the north of India, who had been clawed past hope of cure by a bear, and was singing his own death–song as his friends bore him along.

"Have makee die," said my 'rickshaw coolie. "Few–yu–ne–ral."

I was aware of the fact. Men, women, and little children poured along the streets, and when the death–song died down, helped it forward. The half–mourners wore only pieces of white cloth about their shoulders. The immediate relatives of the dead were in white from head to foot. "Aho! Ahaa! Aho!" they wailed very softly, for fear of breaking the cadence of the falling rain, and they disappeared. All except one old woman, who could not keep pace with the procession, and so came along alone, crooning softly to herself. "Aho! Ahaa! Aho!" she whispered.

The little children in the courtyard were clustered round the Professor's camera. But one child had a very bad skin disease on his innocent head,—so bad that none of the others would play with him, —and he stood in a corner and sobbed and sobbed as though his heart would break. Poor little Gehazi!

No. XIV

Explains in What Manner I Was Taken to Venice in the Rain, and Climbed Into a Devil Fort; a Tin-pot Exhibition, and a Bath. of the Maiden and the Boltless Door, the Cultivator and His Fields, and the Manufacture of Ethnological Theories at Railroad Speed. Ends With Kioto - "There's a Deal O' Fine Confused Feedin' About Sheep's Head." - --christopher North.

"Come along to Osaka," said the Professor.

"Why? I'm quite comfy here, and we shall have lobster cutlets for tiffin; and, anyhow, it is raining heavily, and we shall get wet."

Sorely against my will—for it was in my mind to fudge Japan from a guide–book while I enjoyed the cookery of the Oriental at Kobé—I was dragged into a 'rickshaw and the rain, and conveyed to a railway station. Even the Japanese cannot make their railway stations lovely, though they do their best. Their system of baggage–booking is borrowed from the Americans; their narrow–gauge lines, locos, and rolling stock are English; their passenger–traffic is regulated with the precision of the Gaul, and the uniforms of their officials come from the nearest ragbag. The passengers themselves were altogether delightful. A large number of them were modified Europeans, and resembled nothing more than Tenniel's picture of the White Rabbit on the first page of *Alice in Wonderland*. They were dressed in neat little tweed suits with fawn–coloured overcoats, and they carried ladies' reticules of black leather and nickel platings. They wore paper and celluloid stuck–up collars which must have been quite thirteen inches round the neck, and their boots were number fours. On their hands—their wee–wee hands—they had white cotton gloves, and they smoked cigarettes from fairy little cigarette cases. That was young Japan—the Japan of the present day.

"Wah, wah, God is great," said the Professor. "But it isn't in human nature for a man who sprawls about on soft mats by instinct to wear Europe clothes as though they belonged to him. If you notice, the last thing that they take to is shoes."

A lapis–lazuli coloured locomotive which, by accident, had a mixed train attached to it happened to loaf up to the platform just then, and we entered a first–class English compartment. There was no stupid double roof, window shade, or abortive thermantidote. It was a London and South–Western carriage. Osaka is about eighteen miles from Kobé, and stands at the head of the bay of Osaka. The train is allowed to go as fast as fifteen miles an hour and to play at the stations all along the line. You must know that the line runs between the hills and the shore, and the drainage–fall is a great deal steeper

than anything we have between Saharunpur and Umballa. The rivers and the hill torrents come down straight from the hills on raised beds of their own formation, which beds again have to be bunded and spanned with girder bridges or—here, perhaps, I may be wrong—tunnelled.

The stations are black–tiled, red–walled, and concrete–floored, and all the plant from signal levers to goods–truck is English. The official colour of the bridges is a yellow–brown most like unto a faded chrysanthemum. The uniform of the ticket–collectors is a peaked forage cap with gold lines, black frock–coat with brass buttons, very long in the skirt, trousers with black mohair braid, and buttoned kid boots. You cannot be rude to a man in such raiment.

But the countryside was the thing that made us open our eyes. Imagine a land of rich black soil, very heavily manured, and worked by the spade and hoe almost exclusively, and if you split your field (of vision) into half–acre plots, you will get a notion of the raw material the cultivator works on. But all I can write will give you no notion of the wantonness of neatness visible in the fields, of the elaborate system of irrigation, and the mathematical precision of the planting. There was no mixing of crops, no waste of boundary in footpath, and no difference of value in the land. The water stood everywhere within ten feet of the surface, as the well–sweeps attested. On the slopes of the foot–hills each drop between the levels was neatly riveted with unmortared stones, and the edges of the watercuts were faced in like manner. The young rice was transplanted very much as draughts are laid on the board; the tea might have been cropped garden box; and between the lines of the mustard the water lay in the drills as in a wooden trough, while the purple of the beans ran up to the mustard and stopped as though cut with a rule.

On the seaboard we saw an almost continuous line of towns variegated with factory chimneys; inland, the crazy–quilt of green, dark–green and gold. Even in the rain the view was lovely, and exactly as Japanese pictures had led me to hope for. Only one drawback occurred to the Professor and myself at the same time. Crops don't grow to the full limit of the seed on heavily worked ground dotted with villages except at a price.

"Cholera?" said I, watching a stretch of well–sweeps.

"Cholera," said the Professor. "Must be, y'know. It's all sewage irrigation."

I felt that I was friends with the cultivators at once. These broad–hatted, blue–clad gentlemen who tilled their fields by hand—except when they borrowed the village buffalo to drive the share through the rice–slough—knew what the scourge meant.

"How much do you think the Government takes in revenue from

vegetable gardens of that kind?" I demanded.

"Bosh," said he, quietly, "you aren't going to describe the land–tenure of Japan. Look at the yellow of the mustard!"

It lay in sheets round the line. It ran up the hills to the dark pines. It rioted over the brown sandbars of the swollen rivers, and faded away by mile after mile to the shores of the leaden sea. The high–peaked houses of brown thatch stood knee–deep in it, and it surged up to the factory chimneys of Osaka.

"Great place, Osaka," said the guide. "All sorts of manufactures there."

Osaka is built into and over and among one thousand eight hundred and ninety–four canals, rivers, dams, and watercuts. What the multitudinous chimneys mean I cannot tell. They have something to do with rice and cotton; but it is not good that the Japs should indulge in trade, and I will not call Osaka a "great commercial *entrepot*." "People who live in paper houses should never sell goods," as the proverb says.

Because of his many wants there is but one hotel for the Englishman in Osaka, and they call it Juter's. Here the views of two civilisations collide and the result is awful. The building is altogether Japanese; wood and tile and sliding screen from top to bottom; but the fitments are mixed. My room, for instance, held a *tokonoma*, made of the polished black stem of a palm and delicate woodwork, framing a scroll picture representing storks. But on the floor over the white mats lay a Brussels carpet that made the indignant toes tingle. From the back verandah one overhung the river which ran straight as an arrow between two lines of houses. They have cabinet–makers in Japan to fit the rivers to the towns. From my verandah I could see three bridges—one a hideous lattice–girder arrangement—and part of a fourth. We were on an island and owned a watergate if we wanted to take a boat.

Apropos of water, be pleased to listen to a Shocking Story. It is written in all the books that the Japanese though cleanly are somewhat casual in their customs. They bathe often with nothing on and together. This notion my experience of the country, gathered in the seclusion of the Oriental at Kobé, made me scoff at. I demanded a tub at Juter's. The infinitesimal man led me down verandahs and upstairs to a beautiful bath–house full of hot and cold water and fitted with cabinet–work, somewhere in a lonely out–gallery. There was naturally no bolt to the door any more than there would be a bolt to a dining–room. Had I been sheltered by the walls of a big Europe bath, I should not have cared, but I was preparing to wash when a pretty maiden opened the door, and indicated that she also would tub in the deep, sunken Japanese bath at my side. When one is dressed only in

one's virtue and a pair of spectacles it is difficult to shut the door in the face of a girl. She gathered that I was not happy, and withdrew giggling, while I thanked heaven, blushing profusely the while, that I had been brought up in a society which unfits a man to bathe *à deux*. Even an experience of the Paddington Swimming Baths would have helped me; but coming straight from India Lady Godiva was a ballet–girl in sentiment compared to this Actæon.

It rained monsoonishly, and the Professor discovered a castle which he needs must see. "It's Osaka Castle," he said, "and it has been fought over for hundreds of years. Come along."

"I've seen castles in India. Raighur, Jodhpur—all sorts of places. Let's have some more boiled salmon. It's good in this station."

"Pig," said the Professor.

We threaded our way over the four thousand and fifty–two canals, etc., where the little children played with the swiftly running water, and never a mother said "don't," till our 'rickshaw stopped outside a fort ditch thirty feet deep, and faced with gigantic granite slabs. On the far side uprose the walls of a fort. But such a fort! Fifty feet was the height of the wall, and never a pinch of mortar in the whole. Nor was the face perpendicular, but curved like the ram of a man–of–war. They know the curve in China, and I have seen French artists, introduce it into books describing a devil–besieged city of Tartary. Possibly everybody else knows it too, but that is not my affair; life as I have said being altogether new to me. The stone was granite, and the men of old time had used it like mud. The dressed blocks that made the profile of the angles were from twenty feet long, ten or twelve feet high, and as many in thickness. There was no attempt at binding, but there was no fault in the jointing.

"And the little Japs built this!" I cried, awe–stricken at the quarries that rose round me.

"Cyclopean masonry," grunted the Professor, punching with a stick a monolith of seventeen feet cube. "Not only did they build it, but they took it. Look at this. Fire!"

The stones had been split and bronzed in places, and the cleavage was the cleavage of fire. Evil must it have been for the armies that led the assault on these monstrous walls. Castles in India I know, and the forts of great Emperors I had seen, but neither Akbar in the north, nor Scindia in the south, had built after this fashion—without ornament, without colour, but with a single eye to savage strength and the utmost purity of line. Perhaps the fort would have looked less forbidding in sunlight. The grey, rain–laden atmosphere through which I saw it suited its spirit. The barracks of the garrison, the commandant's very dainty house, a peach–garden, and two deer were foreign to the place. They should have peopled it with giants from the

mountains, instead of—Gurkhas! A Jap infantryman is not a Gurkha, though he might be mistaken for one as long as he stood still. The sentry at the quarter–guard belonged, I fancy, to the 4th Regiment. His uniform was black or blue, with red facings, and shoulder–straps carrying the number of the regiment in cloth. The rain necessitated an overcoat, but why he should have carried knapsack, blanket, boots, *and* binoculars I could not fathom. The knapsack was of cowskin with the hair on, the boots were strapped soles, cut on each side, while a heavy country blanket was rolled U–shape over the head of the knapsack, fitting close to the back. In the place usually occupied by the mess–tin was a black leather case shaped like a field–glass. This must be a mistake of mine, but I can only record as I see. The rifle was a side–bolt weapon of some kind, and the bayonet an uncommonly good sword one, locked to the muzzle, English fashion. The ammunition pouches, as far as I could see under the greatcoat, ran on the belt in front, and were double–strapped down. White spatterdashes—very dirty—and peaked cap completed the outfit. I surveyed the man with interest, and would have made further examination of him but for fear of the big bayonet. His arms were well kept,—not speckless by any means,—but his uniform would have made an English colonel swear. There was no portion of his body except the neck that it pretended to fit. I peeped into the quarter–guard. Fans and dainty tea–sets do not go with one's notions of a barrack. One drunken defaulter of certain far–away regiments that I could name would not only have cleared out that quarter–guard, but brought away all its fittings except the rifle–racks. Yet the little men, who were always gentle, and never got drunk, were mounting guard over a pile that, with a blue fire on the bastions, might have served for the guard–gates of Hell.

I climbed to the top of the fort and was rewarded by a view of thirty miles of country, chiefly pale yellow mustard and blue–green pine, and the sight of the very large city of Osaka fading away into mist. The guide took most pleasure in the factory chimneys. "There is an exposition here—an exposition of industrialities. Come and see," said he. He took us down from that high place and showed us the glory of the land in the shape of corkscrews, tin mugs, egg–whisks, dippers, silks, buttons, and all the trumpery that can be stitched on a card and sold for five–pence three farthings. The Japanese unfortunately make all these things for themselves, and are proud of it. They have nothing to learn from the West as far as finish is concerned, and by intuition know how to case and mount wares tastefully. The exposition was in four large sheds running round a central building which held only screens, pottery, and cabinet–ware loaned for the occasion. I rejoiced to see that the common people did

not care for the penknives, and the pencils, and the mock jewellery. They left those sheds alone and discussed the screens, first taking off their clogs that the inlaid floor of the room might not suffer. Of all the gracious things I beheld, two only remain in my memory,—one a screen in grey representing the heads of six devils instinct with malice and hate; the other, a bold sketch in monochrome of an old woodcutter wrestling with the down–bent branch of a tree. Two hundred years have passed since the artist dropped his pencil, but you may almost hear the tough wood jar under the stroke of the chopper, as the old man puts his back into the task and draws in the labouring breath. There is a picture by Legros of a beggar dying in a ditch, which might have been suggested by that screen.

Next morning, after a night's rain, which sent the river racing under the frail balconies at eight miles an hour, the sun broke through the clouds. Is this a little matter to you who can count upon him daily? I had not seen him since March, and was beginning to feel anxious. Then the land of peach blossom spread its draggled wings abroad and rejoiced. All the pretty maidens put on their loveliest crêpe sashes,—fawn colour, pink, blue, orange, and lilac,—all the little children picked up a baby each, and went out to be happy. In a temple garden full of blossom I performed the miracle of Deucalion with two cents' worth of sweets. The babies swarmed on the instant, till, for fear of raising all the mothers too, I forbore to give them any more. They smiled and nodded prettily, and trotted after me, forty strong, the big ones helping the little, and the little ones skipping in the puddles. A Jap child never cries, never scuffles, never fights, and never makes mud pies except when it lives on the banks of a canal. Yet, lest it should spread its sash–bow and become a bald–headed angel ere its time, Providence has decreed that it should never, never blow its little nose. Notwithstanding the defect, I love it.

There was no business in Osaka that day because of the sunshine and the budding of the trees. Everybody went to a tea–house with his friends. I went also, but first ran along a boulevard by the side of the river, pretending to look at the Mint. This was only a common place of solid granite where they turn out dollars and rubbish of that kind. All along the boulevard the cherry, peach, and plum trees, pink, white, and red, touched branches and made a belt of velvety soft colour as far as the eye could reach. Weeping willows were the normal ornaments of the waterside, this revel of bloom being only part of the prodigality of Spring. The Mint may make a hundred thousand dollars a day, but all the silver in its keeping will not bring again the three weeks of the peach blossom which, even beyond the chrysanthemum, is the crown and glory of Japan. For some act of surpassing merit performed in a past life I have been enabled to hit those three weeks

in the middle.

"Now is the Japanese festival of the cherry blossom," said the guide. "All the people will be festive. They will pray too and go to the tea–gardens."

Now you might wall an Englishman about with cherry trees in bloom from head to heel, and after the first day he would begin to complain of the smell. As you know, the Japanese arrange a good many of their festivals in honour of flowers, and this is surely commendable, for blossoms are the most tolerant of gods.

The tea–house system of the Japanese filled me with pleasure at a pleasure that I could not fully comprehend. It pays a company in Osaka to build on the outskirts of the town a nine–storied pagoda of wood and iron, to lay out elaborate gardens round it, and to hang the whole with strings of blood–red lanterns, because the Japanese will come wherever there is a good view to sit on a mat and discuss tea and sweetmeats and *saki*. This Eiffel Tower is, to tell the truth, anything but pretty, yet the surroundings redeem it. Although it was not quite completed, the lower storeys were full of tea–stalls and tea–drinkers. The men and women were obviously admiring the view. It is an astounding thing to see an Oriental so engaged; it is as though he had stolen something from a sahib.

From Osaka—canal–cut, muddy, and fascinating Osaka—the Professor, Mister Yamagutchi,—the guide,—and I took train to Kioto, an hour from Osaka. On the road I saw four buffaloes at as many rice–ploughs—which was noticeable as well as wasteful. A buffalo at rest must cover the half of a Japanese field; but perhaps they are kept on the mountain ledges and only pulled down when wanted. The Professor says that what I call buffalo is really bullock. The worst of travelling with an accurate man is his accuracy. We argued about the Japanese in the train, about his present and his future, and the manner in which he has ranged himself on the side of the grosser nations of the earth.

"Did it hurt his feelings very much to wear our clothes? Didn't he rebel when he put on a pair of trousers for the first time? Won't he grow sensible some day and drop foreign habits?" These were some of the questions I put to the landscape and the Professor.

"He was a baby," said the latter, "a big baby. I think his sense of humour was at the bottom of the change, but he didn't know that a nation which once wears trousers never takes 'em off. You see 'enlightened' Japan is only one–and–twenty years old, and people are not very wise at one–and–twenty. Read Reed's *Japan* and learn how the change came about. There was a Mikado and a *Shogun* who was Sir Frederick Roberts, but he tried to be the Viceroy and—"

"Bother the *Shogun*! I've seen something like the Babu class, and

something like the farmer class. What I want to see is the Rajput class —the man who used to wear the thousands and thousands of swords in the curio–shops. Those swords were as much made for use as a Rajputana sabre. Where are the men who used 'em? Show me a Samurai."

The Professor answered not a word, but scrutinised heads on the wayside platforms. "I take it that the high–arched forehead, club nose, and eyes close together—the Spanish type—are from Rajput stock, while the German–faced Jap is the Khattri—the lower class."

Thus we talked of the natures and dispositions of men we knew nothing about till we had decided (1) that the painful politeness of the Japanese nation rose from the habit, dropped only twenty years ago, of extended and emphatic sword–wearing, even as the Rajput is the pink of courtesy because his friend goes armed; (2) that this politeness will disappear in another generation, or will at least be seriously impaired; (3) that the cultured Japanese of the English pattern will corrupt and defile the tastes of his neighbours till (4) Japan altogether ceases to exist as a separate nation and becomes a button–hook manufacturing appanage of America; (5) that these things being so, and sure to happen in two or three hundred years, the Professor and I were lucky to reach Japan betimes; and (6) that it was foolish to form theories about the country until we had seen a little of it.

So we came to the city of Kioto in regal sunshine, tempered by a breeze that drove the cherry blossoms in drifts about the streets. One Japanese town, in the southern provinces at least, is very like another to look at—a grey–black sea of house roofs, speckled with the white walls of the fire–proof godowns where merchants and rich men keep their chief treasures. The general level is broken by the temple roofs, which are turned up at the edges, and remotely resemble so many terai–hats. Kioto fills a plain almost entirely surrounded by wooded hills, very familiar in their aspect to those who have seen the Siwaliks. Once upon a time it was the capital of Japan, and to–day numbers two hundred and fifty thousand people. It is laid out like an American town. All the streets run at right angles to each other. That, by the way, is exactly what the Professor and I are doing. We are elaborating the theory of the Japanese people, and we can't agree.

No. XV

Kioto and How I Fell in Love With the Chief Belle There After I Had Conferred With Certain China Merchants Who Trafficked in Tea. Shows Further How, in a Great Temple, I Broke the Tenth Commandment in Fifty-three Places and Bowed Down Before Kano and a Carpenter. Takes Me to Arashima - "Could I but Write the Things I See, My World Would Haste to Gaze With Me. but Since the Traitor Pen Hath Failed to Paint Earth's Loveliness Unveiled, I Can but Pray My Folk Who Read:-- 'for Lavish Will Take Starveling Deed."'

We are consorting with sixty of the *Sahib–log* in the quaintest hotel that ever you saw. It stands on the hillside overlooking the whole town of Kioto, and its garden is veritable Japanese. Fantastically trimmed tea trees, junipers, dwarfed pine, and cherry, are mixed up with ponds of goldfish, stone lanterns, quaint rock–work, and velvety turf all at an angle of thirty–five degrees. Behind us the pines, red and black, cover the hill and run down in a long spur to the town. But an auctioneer's catalogue cannot describe the charms of the place or deal justly with the tea–garden full of cherry trees that lies a hundred yards below the hotel. We were solemnly assured that hardly any one came to Kioto. That is why we meet every soul in the ship that had brought us to Nagasaki; and that is why our ears are constantly assailed with the clamour of people who are discussing places which must be "done." An Englishman is a very horrible person when he is on the war–path; so is an American, a Frenchman, or a German.

I had been watching the afternoon sunlight upon the trees and the town, the shift and play of colour in the crowded street of the cherry, and crooning to myself because the sky was blue and I was alive beneath it with a pair of eyes in my head.

Immediately the sun went down behind the hills the air became bitterly cold, but the people in crêpe sashes and silk coats never ceased their sober frolicking. There was to be a great service in honour of the cherry blossom the next day at the chief temple of Kioto, and they were getting ready for it. As the light died in a wash of crimson, the last thing I saw was a frieze of three little Japanese babies with fuzzy top–knots and huge sashes trying to hang head downwards from a bamboo rail. They did it, and the closing eye of day regarded them solemnly as it shut. The effect in *silhouette* was immense!

A company of China tea–merchants were gathered in the smoking–room after dinner, and by consequence talked their own

"shop," which was interesting. Their language is not Our language, for they know nothing of the tea–gardens, of drying and withering and rolling, of the assistant who breaks his collar–bone in the middle of the busiest season, or of the sickness that smites the coolie lines at about the same time. They are happy men who get their tea by the break of a thousand chests from the interior of the country and play with it upon the London markets. None the less they have a very wholesome respect for Indian tea, which they cordially detest. Here is the sort of argument that a Foochow man, himself a very heavy buyer, flung at me across the table.

"You may talk about your Indian teas,—Assam and Kangra, or whatever you call them,—but I tell *you* that if ever they get a strong hold in England, the doctors will be down on them, Sir. They'll be medically forbidden. See if they aren't. They shatter your nerves to pieces. Unfit for human consumption—that's what they are. Though I don't deny they *are* selling at Home. They don't keep, though. After three months, the sorts that I've seen in London turn to hay."

"I think you are wrong there," said a Hankow man. "My experience is that the Indian teas keep better than ours by a long way. But"—turning to me—"if we could only get the China Government to take off the duties, we could smash Indian tea and every one connected with it. We could lay down tea in Mincing Lane at threepence a pound. No, we do not adulterate our teas. That's one of *your* tricks in India. We get it as pure as yours—every chest in the break equal to sample."

"You can trust your native buyers then?" I interrupted.

"Trust 'em? Of course we can," cut in the Foochow merchant. "There are no tea–gardens in China as you understand them. The peasantry cultivate the tea, and the buyers buy from them for cash each season. You can give a Chinaman a hundred thousand dollars and tell him to turn it into tea of your own particular chop—up to sample. Of course the man may be a thorough–paced rogue in many ways, but he knows better than to play the fool with an English house. Back comes your tea—a thousand half–chests, we'll say. You open perhaps five, and the balance go home untried. But they are all equal to sample. That's business, that is. The Chinaman's a born merchant and full of backbone. I like him for business purposes. The Jap's no use. He isn't man enough to handle a hundred thousand dollars. Very possibly he'd run off with it—or try to."

"The Jap has no business savvy. God knows I hate the Chinamen," said a bass voice behind the tobacco smoke, "but you can do business with him. The Jap's a little huckster who can't see beyond his nose."

They called for drinks and told tales, these merchants of China,—tales of money and bales and boxes,—but through all their stories

there was an implied leaning upon native help which, even allowing for the peculiarities of China, was rather startling. "The compradore did this: Ho Whang did that: a syndicate of Pekin bankers did the other thing"—and so on. I wondered whether a certain lordly indifference as to details had anything to do with eccentricities in the China tea–breaks and fluctuations of quality, which do occur in spite of all the men said to the contrary. Again, the merchants spoke of China as a place where fortunes are made—a land only waiting to be opened up to pay a hundredfold. They told me of the Home Government helping private trade, in kind and unobtrusive ways, to get a firmer hold on the Public Works Department contracts that are now flying abroad. This was pleasant hearing. But the strangest thing of all was the tone of hope and almost contentment that pervaded their speech. They were well–to–do men making money, and they liked their lives. You know how, when two or three of Us are gathered together in our own barren pauper land, we groan in chorus and are disconsolate. The civilian, the military man, and the merchant, they are all alike. The one overworked and broken by exchange, the second a highly organised beggar, and the third a nobody in particular, always at loggerheads with what he considers an academical Government. I knew in a way that We were a grim and miserable community in India, but I did not know the measure of Our fall till I heard men talking about fortunes, success, money, and the pleasure, good living, and frequent trips to England that money brings. Their friends did not seem to die with unnatural swiftness, and their wealth enabled them to endure the calamity of Exchange with calm. Yes, we of India are a wretched folk.

Very early in the dawn, before the nesting sparrows were awake, there was a sound in the air which frightened me out of my virtuous sleep. It was a lisping mutter—very deep and entirely strange. "That's an earthquake, and the hillside is beginning to slide," quoth I, taking measures of defence. The sound repeated itself again and again, till I argued, that if it were the precursor of an earthquake, the affair had stuck half–way. At breakfast men said: "That was the great bell of Kioto just next door to the hotel a little way up the hillside. As a bell, y'know, it's rather a failure, from an English point of view. They don't ring it properly, and the volume of sound is comparatively insignificant."

"So I fancied when I first heard it," I said casually, and went out up the hill under sunshine that filled the heart and trees, that filled the eye with joy. You know the unadulterated pleasure of that first clear morning in the Hills when a month's solid idleness lies before the loafer, and the scent of the deodars mixes with the scent of the meditative cigar. That was my portion when I stepped through the

violet–studded long grass into forgotten little Japanese cemeteries—all broken pillars and lichened tablets—till I found, under a cut in the hillside, the big bell of Kioto—twenty feet of green bronze hung inside a fantastically roofed shed of wooden beams. A beam, by the way, *is* a beam in Japan; anything under a foot thick is a stick. These beams were the best parts of big trees, clamped with bronze and iron. A knuckle rapped lightly on the lip of the bell—it was not more than five feet from the ground—made the great monster breathe heavily, and the blow of a stick started a hundred shrill–voiced echoes round the darkness of its dome. At one side, guyed by half a dozen small hawsers, hung a battering–ram, a twelve–foot spar bound with iron, its nose pointing full–butt at a chrysanthemum in high relief on the belly of the bell. Then, by special favour of Providence, which always looks after the idle, they began to sound sixty strokes. Half a dozen men swung the ram back and forth with shoutings and outcries, till it had gathered sufficient way, and the loosened ropes let it hurl itself against the chrysanthemum. The boom of the smitten bronze was swallowed up by the earth below and the hillside behind, so that its volume was not proportionate to the size of the bell, exactly as the men had said. An English ringer would have made thrice as much of it. But then he would have lost the crawling jar that ran through rock–stone and pine for twenty yards round, that beat through the body of the listener and died away under his feet like the shock of a distant blasting. I endured twenty strokes and removed myself, not in the least ashamed of mistaking the sound for an earthquake. Many times since I have heard the bell speak when I was far off. It says *B–r–r–r* very deep down in its throat, but when you have once caught the noise you will never forget it. And so much for the big bell of Kioto.

From its house a staircase of cut stone takes you down to the temple of Chion–in, where I arrived on Easter Sunday just before service, and in time to see the procession of the Cherry Blossom. They had a special service at a place called St. Peter's at Rome about the same time, but the priests of Buddha excelled the priests of the Pope. Thus it happened. The main front of the temple was three hundred feet long, a hundred feet deep, and sixty feet high. One roof covered it all, and saving for the tiles there was no stone in the structure; nothing but wood three hundred years old, as hard as iron. The pillars that upheld the roof were three feet, four feet, and five feet in diameter, and guiltless of any paint. They showed the natural grain of the wood till they were lost in the rich brown darkness far overhead. The cross–beams were of grained wood of great richness; cedar–wood and camphor–wood and the hearts of gigantic pine had been put under requisition for the great work. One carpenter—they call him only a carpenter—had designed the whole, and his name is

remembered to this day. A half of the temple was railed off for the congregation by a two–foot railing, over which silks of ancient device had been thrown. Within the railing were all the religious fittings, but these I cannot describe. All I remember was row upon row of little lacquered stands each holding a rolled volume of sacred writings; an altar as tall as a cathedral organ where gold strove with colour, colour with lacquer, and lacquer with inlay, and candles such as Holy Mother Church uses only on her greatest days, shed a yellow light that softened all. Bronze incense–burners in the likeness of dragons and devils fumed under the shadow of silken banners, behind which, wood tracery, as delicate as frost on a window–pane, climbed to the ridge–pole. Only there was no visible roof to this temple. The light faded away under the monstrous beams, and we might have been in a cave a hundred fathoms below the earth but for the sunshine and blue sky at the portals where the little children squabbled and shouted.

On my word, I tried to note down soberly what lay before me, but the eye tired, and the pencil ran off into fragmentary ejaculations. But what would you have done if you had seen what I saw when I went round the temple verandah to what we must call a vestry at the back? It was a big building connected with the main one by a wooden bridge of deepest time–worn brown. Down the bridge ran a line of saffron–coloured matting, and down the matting, very slowly and solemnly, as befitted their high office, filed three and fifty priests, each one clad in at least four garments of brocade, crêpe, and silk. There were silks that do not see the light of the markets, and brocades that only temple wardrobes know.

There was sea–green watered silk with golden dragons; terra–cotta crêpe with ivory–white chrysanthemums clustering upon it; black–barred silk shot with yellow flames; lapis–lazuli silk and silver fishes; avanturine silk with plaques of grey–green let in; cloth of gold over dragon's blood; and saffron and brown silk stiff as a board with embroidery. We returned to the temple now filled with the gorgeous robes. The little lacquer stands were the priests' book–racks. Some lay down among them, while others moved very softly about the golden altars and the incense–burners; and the high priest disposed himself, with his back to the congregation, in a golden chair through which his robe winked like the shards of a tiger–beetle.

In solemn calm the books were unrolled, and the priests began chanting Pali texts in honour of the Apostle of Unworldliness, who had written that they were not to wear gold or mixed colours, or touch the precious metals. But for a few unimportant accessories in the way of half–seen images of great men—but these could have been called saints—the scene before me might have been unrolled in a Roman Catholic cathedral, say the rich one at Arundel. The same

thought was in other minds, for in a pause of the slow chant a voice behind me whispered:—

> "To hear the blessed mutter of the mass
> And see God made and eaten all day long."

It was a man from Hong–Kong, very angry that he too had not been permitted to photograph an interior. He called all this splendour of ritual and paraphernalia just "an interior," and revenged himself by spitting Browning at it.

The chant quickened as the service drew to an end, and the candles burned low.

We went away to other parts of the temple pursued by the chorus of the devout till we were out of earshot in a paradise of screens. Two or three hundred years ago there lived a painterman of the name of Kano. Him the temple of Chion–in brought to beautify the walls of the rooms. Since a wall is a screen, and a screen is a wall, Kano, R. A., had rather a large job. But he was helped by pupils and imitators, and in the end left a few hundred screens which are all finished pictures. As you already know, the interior of a temple is very simple in its arrangements. The priests live on white mats, in little rooms, with brown ceilings, that can at pleasure be thrown into one large room. This also was the arrangement at Chion–in, though the rooms were comparatively large and gave on to sumptuous verandahs and passages. Since the Emperor occasionally visited the place there was a room set apart for him of more than ordinary splendour. Twisted silk tassels of intricate design served in lieu of catches to pull back the sliding screens, and the woodwork was lacquered. These be only feeble words, but it is not in my grip to express the restfulness of it all, or the power that knew how to secure the desired effect with a turn of the wrist. The great Kano drew numbed pheasants huddled together on the snow–covered bough of a pine; or a peacock in his pride spreading his tail to delight his womenfolk; or a riot of chrysanthemums poured out of a vase; or the figures of toilworn countryfolk coming home from market; or a hunting scene at the foot of Fujiyama. The equally great carpenter who built the temple framed each picture with absolute precision under a ceiling that was a miracle of device, and Time, the greatest artist of the three, touched the gold so that it became amber, and the woodwork so that it grew dark honey–colour, and the shining surface of the lacquer so that it became deep and rich and semi–transparent. As in one room, so in all the others. Sometimes we slid back the screens and discovered a tiny bald–pated acolyte praying over an incense–burner, and sometimes a lean priest eating his rice; but generally the rooms were empty, swept

and garnished.

Minor artists had worked with Kano the magnificent. These had been allowed to lay brush upon panels of wood in the outer verandahs, and very faithfully had they toiled. It was not till the guide called my attention to them that I discovered scores of sketches in monochrome low down on the verandah doors. An iris broken by the fall of a branch torn off by a surly ape; a bamboo spray bowed before the wind that was ruffling a lake; a warrior of the past ambushing his enemy in a thicket, hand on sword, and mouth gathered into puckers of intensest concentration, were among the many notes that met my eye. How long, think you, would a sepia–drawing stand without defacement in the midst of our civilisation were it put on the bottom panel of a door, or the scantling of a kitchen passage? Yet in this gentle country a man may stoop down and write his name in the very dust, certain that, if the writing be craftily done, his children's children will reverently let it stand.

"Of course there are no such temples made nowadays," I said, when we regained the sunshine, and the Professor was trying to find out how panel pictures and paper screens went so well with the dark dignity of massive woodwork.

"They are building a temple on the other side of the city," said Mister Yamagutchi. "Come along, and see the hair–ropes which hang there."

We came flying in our 'rickshaws across Kioto, till we saw netted in a hundred cobwebs of scaffolding a temple even larger than the great Chion–in.

"That was burned down long ago,—the old temple that was here, you know. Then the people made a penny subscription from all parts of Japan, and those who could not send money sent their hair to be made into rope. They have been ten years building this new temple. It is all wood," said the guide.

The place was alive with men who were putting the finishing touches to the great tiled roof and laying down the floors. Wooden pillars as gigantic, carving as wantonly elaborate, eaves as intricate in their mouldings, and joinery as perfect as anything in the Chion–in temple met me at every turn. But the fresh–cut wood was creamy white and lemon where, in the older building, it had been iron–hard and brown. Only the raw ends of the joists were stopped with white lacquer to prevent the incursions of insects, and the deeper tracery was protected against birds by fine wire netting. Everything else was wood—wood down to the massive clamped and bolted beams of the foundation which I investigated through gaps in the flooring.

Japan is a great people. Her masons play with stone, her carpenters with wood, her smiths with iron, and her artists with life,

death, and all the eye can take in. Mercifully she has been denied the last touch of firmness in her character which would enable her to play with the whole round world. We possess that—We, the nation of the glass flower–shade, the pink worsted mat, the red and green china puppy–dog, and the poisonous Brussels carpet. It is our compensation….

"Temples!" said a man from Calcutta, some hours later as I raved about what I had seen. "Temples! I'm sick of temples. If I've seen one, I've seen fifty thousand of 'em—all exactly alike. But I tell you what is exciting. Go down the rapids at Arashima,—eight miles from here. It's better fun than any temple with a fat–faced Buddha in the middle."

But I took my friend's advice. Have I managed to convey the impression that April is fine in Japan? Then I apologise. It is generally rainy, and the rain is cold; but the sunshine when it comes is worth it all. We shouted with joy of living when our fiery, untamed 'rickshaws bounded from stone to stone of the vilely paved streets of the suburbs and brought us into what ought to have been vegetable gardens but were called fields. The face of the flat lands was cut up in every direction by bunds, and all the roads seem to run on the top of them.

"Never," said the Professor, driving his stick into the black soil, "never have I imagined irrigation so perfectly controlled as this is. Look at the *rajbahars* faced with stone and fitted with sluices; look at the water–wheels and,—phew! but they manure their fields too well."

The first circle of fields round any town is always pretty rank, but this superfluity of scent continued throughout the country. Saving a few parts near Dacca and Patna, the face of the land was more thickly populated than Bengal and was worked five times better. There was no single patch untilled, and no cultivation that was not up to the full limit of the soil's productiveness. Onions, barley, in little ridges between the ridges of tea, beans, rice, and a half a dozen other things that we did not know the names of, crowded the eye already wearied with the glare of the golden mustard. Manure is a good thing, but manual labour is better. We saw both even to excess. When a Japanese ryot has done everything to his field that he can possibly think of, he weeds the barley stalk by stalk with his finger and thumb. This is true. I saw a man doing it.

We headed through the marvellous country straight across the plain on which Kioto stands, till we reached the range of hills on the far side, and found ourselves mixed up with half a mile of lumber–yard.

Cultivation and water–cuts were gone, and our tireless 'rickshaws were running by the side of a broad, shallow river, choked with logs of every size. I am prepared to believe anything of the Japanese, but I do not see why Nature, which they say is the same pitiless Power all

the world over, should send them their logs unsplintered by rocks, neatly barked, and with a slot neatly cut at the end of each pole for the reception of a rope, I have seen timber fly down the Ravi in spate, and it was hooked out as ragged as a tooth–brush. This material comes down clean. Consequently the slot is another miracle.

"When the day is fine," said the guide, softly, "all the people of Kioto come to Arashima to have picnics."

"But they are always having picnics in the cherry–tree gardens. They picnic in the tea–houses. They—they—"

"Yes, when it is a fine day, they always go somewhere and picnic."

"But why? Man isn't made to picnic."

"But why? Because it is a fine day. Englishmen say that the money of the Japanese comes from heaven, because they always do nothing —so you think. But look now, here is a pretty place."

The river charged down a turn in the pine–grown hills, and broke in silver upon the timber and the remains of a light bridge washed away some days before. On our side, and arranged so as to face the fairest view of the young maples, stood a row of tea–houses and booths built over the stream. The sunlight that could not soften the gloom of the pines dwelt tenderly among the green of the maples and touched the reaches below where the cherry blossom broke in pink foam against the black–roofed houses of a village across the water.

There I stopped.

No. XVI

The Party in the Parlour Who Played Games. a Complete History of All Modern Japanese Art; a Survey of the Past, and a Prophecy of the Future, Arranged and Composed in the Kioto Factories - "Oh, Brave New World That Has Such Creatures in It, How Beautiful Mankind Is!"

How I got to the tea–house I cannot tell. Perhaps a pretty girl waved a bough of cherry blossom at me, and I followed the invitation. I know that I sprawled upon the mats and watched the clouds scudding across the hills and the logs flying down the rapids, and smelt the smell of the raw peeled timber, and listened to the grunts of the boatmen as they wrestled with that and the rush of the river, and was altogether happier than it is lawful for a man to be.

The lady of the tea–house insisted upon screening us off from the other pleasure–parties who were tiffining in the same verandah. She brought beautiful blue screens with storks on them and slid them into grooves. I stood it as long as I could. There were peals of laughter in the next compartment, the pattering of soft feet, the clinking of little dishes, and at the chinks of the screens the twinkle of diamond eyes. A whole family had come in from Kioto for the day's pleasuring. Mamma looked after grandmamma, and the young aunt looked after a guitar, and the two girls of fourteen and fifteen looked after a merry little tomboy of eight, who, when she thought of it, looked after the baby who had the air of looking after the whole party. Grandmamma was dressed in dark blue, mamma in blue and grey, the girls had gorgeous dresses of lilac, fawn, and primrose crêpe with silk sashes, the colour of apple blossom and the inside of a newly cut melon; the tomboy was in old gold and russet brown; but the baby tumbled his fat little body across the floor among the dishes in the colours of the Japanese rainbow, which owns no crude tints. They were all pretty, all except grandmamma, who was merely good–humoured and very bald, and when they had finished their dainty dinner, and the brown lanquer stands, the blue and white crockery, and the jade–green drinking–cups had been taken away, the aunt played a little piece on the *samisen*, and the girls played blindman's–buff all round the tiny room.

Flesh and blood could not have stayed on the other side of the screens. I wanted to play too, but I was too big and too rough, and so could only sit in the verandah, watching these dainty bits of Dresden at their game. They shrieked and giggled and chattered and sat down on the floor with the innocent abandon of maidenhood, and broke off to kiss the baby when he showed signs of being overlooked. They played puss–in–the–corner, their feet tied with blue and white

handkerchiefs because the room did not allow unfettered freedom of limb, and when they could play no more for laughing, they fanned themselves as they lay propped up against the blue screens,—each girl a picture no painter could reproduce,—and I shrieked with the best of them till I rolled off the verandah and nearly dropped into the laughing street. Was I a fool? Then I fooled in good company, for an austere man from India—a person who puts his faith in race–horses and believes nothing except the Civil Code—was also at Arashima that day. I met him flushed and excited.

"'Had a lively time," he panted, with a hundred children at his heels. "There's a sort of roulette table here where you can gamble for cakes. I bought the owner's stock–in–trade for three dollars and ran the Monte Carlo for the benefit of the kids—about five thousand of 'em. Never had such fun in my life. It beats the Simla lotteries hollow. They were perfectly orderly till they had cleared the tables of everything except a big sugar–tortoise. Then they rushed the bank, and I ran away."

And he was a hard man who had not played with anything as innocent as sweetmeats for many years!

When we were all weak with laughing, and the Professor's camera was mixed up in a tangle of laughing maidens to the confusion of his pictures, we too ran away from the tea–house and wandered down the river bank till we found a boat of sewn planks which poled us across the swollen river, and landed us on a little rocky path overhanging the water where the iris and the violet ran riot together and jubilant waterfalls raced through the undergrowth of pine and maple. We were at the foot of the Arashima rapids, and all the pretty girls of Kioto were with us looking at the view. Up–stream a lonely black pine stood out from all its fellows to peer up the bend where the racing water ran deep in oily swirls. Down–stream the river threshed across the rocks and troubled the fields of fresh logs on its bosom, while men in blue drove silver–white boats gunwale–deep into the foam of its onset and hooked the logs away. Underfoot the rich earth of the hillside sent up the breath of the turn of the year to the maples that had already caught the message from the fire–winds of April. Oh! it was good to be alive, to trample the stalks of the iris, to drag down the cherry–bloom spray in a wash of dew across the face, and to gather the violets for the mere pleasure of heaving them into the torrent and reaching out for fairer flowers.

"What a nuisance it is to be a slave to the camera," said the Professor, upon whom the dumb influences of the season were working though he knew it not.

"What a nuisance it is to be a slave to the pen," I answered, for the spring had come to the land. I had hated the spring for seven years

because to me it meant discomfort.

"Let us go straight home and see the flowers come out in the Parks."

"Let us enjoy what lies to our hand, you Philistine." And we did till a cloud darkened and a wind ruffled the river reaches, and we returned to our 'rickshaws sighing with contentment.

"How many people do you suppose the land supports to the square mile?" said the Professor, at a turn in the homeward road. He had been reading statistics.

"Nine hundred," I said at a venture. "It's thicker set with humans than Sarun or Behar. Say one thousand."

"Two thousand two hundred and fifty odd. Can you believe it?"

"Looking at the landscape I can, but I don't suppose India will believe it. S'pose I write fifteen hundred?"

"They'll say you exaggerate just the same. Better stick to the true total. Two thousand two hundred and fifty–six to the square mile, and not a sign of poverty in the houses. How do they do it?"

I should like to know the answer to that question. Japan of my limited view is inhabited almost entirely by little children whose duty is to prevent their elders from becoming too frivolous. The babies do a little work occasionally, but their parents interfere by petting them. At Yami's hotel the attendance is in the hands of ten–year–olds because everybody else has gone out picnicing among the cherry trees. The little imps find time to do a man's work and to scuffle on the staircase between whiles. My special servitor, called "The Bishop" on account of the gravity of his appearance, his blue apron, and gaiters, is the liveliest of the lot, but even his energy cannot account for the Professor's statistics of population….

I have seen one sort of work among the Japanese, but it was not the kind that makes crops. It was purely artistic. A ward of the city of Kioto is devoted to manufactures. A manufacturer in this part of the world does not hang out a sign. He may be known in Paris and New York: that is the concern of the two cities. The Englishman who wishes to find his establishment in Kioto has to hunt for him up and down slums with the aid of a guide. I have seen three manufactories. The first was of porcelain–ware, the second of *cloissonnée*, and the third of lacquer, inlay, and bronzes. The first was behind black wooden palings, and for external appearance might just as well have been a tripe–shop. Inside sat the manager opposite a tiny garden four feet square in which a papery–looking palm grew out of a coarse stoneware pot and overshadowed a dwarfed pine. The rest of the room was filled with pottery waiting to be packed—modern Satsuma for the most part, the sort of thing you get at an auction.

"This made send Europe—India—America," said the manager,

calmly. "You come to see?"

He took us along a verandah of polished wood to the kilns, to the clay vats, and the yards where the tiny "saggers" were awaiting their complement of pottery. There are differences many and technical between Japanese and Burslem pottery in the making, but these are of no consequence. In the moulding house, where they were making the bodies of Satsuma vases, the wheels, all worked by hand, ran true as a hair. The potter sat on a clean mat with his tea–things at his side. When he had turned out a vase–body he saw that it was good, nodded appreciatively to himself, and poured out some tea ere starting the next one. The potters lived close to the kilns and had nothing pretty to look at. It was different in the painting rooms. Here in a cabinet–like house sat the men, women, and boys who painted the designs on the vases after the first firing. That all their arrangements were scrupulously neat is only saying that they were Japanese; that their surroundings were fair and proper is only saying that they were artists. A sprig of a cherry blossom stood out defiantly against the black of the garden paling; a gnarled pine cut the blue of the sky with its spiky splinters as it lifted itself above the paling, and in a little pond the iris and the horsetail nodded to the wind. The workers when at fault had only to lift their eyes, and Nature herself would graciously supply the missing link of a design. Somewhere in dirty England men dream of craftsmen working under conditions which shall help and not stifle the half–formed thought. They even form guilds and write semi–rhythmical prayers to Time and Chance and all the other gods that they worship, to bring about the desired end. Would they have their dream realised, let them see how they make pottery in Japan, each man sitting on a snowy mat with loveliness of line and colour within arm's length of him, while with downcast eyes he—splashes in the conventional diaper of a Satsuma vase as fast as he can! The Barbarians want Satsuma and they shall have it, if it has to be made in Kioto one piece per twenty minutes. So much for the baser forms of the craft!

The owner of the second establishment lived in a blackwood cabinet—it was profanation to call it a house—alone with a bronze of priceless workmanship, a set of blackwood furniture, and all the medals that his work had won for him in England, France, Germany, and America. He was a very quiet and cat–like man, and spoke almost in a whisper. Would we be pleased to inspect the manufactory? He led us through a garden—it was nothing in his eyes, but we stopped to admire long. Stone lanterns, green with moss, peeped through clumps of papery bamboos where bronze storks were pretending to feed. A dwarfed pine, its foliage trimmed to dish–like plaques, threw its arms far across a fairy pond where the fat, lazy carp grubbed and rooted,

and a couple of eared grebes squawked at us from the protection of the—waterbutt. So perfect was the silence of the place that we heard the cherry blossoms falling into the water and the lisping of the fish against the stones. We were in the very heart of the Willow–Pattern Plate and loath to move for fear of breaking it. The Japanese are born bower–birds. They collect water–worn stones, quaintly shaped rocks, and veined pebbles for the ornamentation of their homes. When they shift house they take the garden away with them—pine trees and all—and the incoming tenant has a free hand.

Half a dozen steps took us over the path of mossy stones to a house where the whole manufactory was at work. One room held the enamel powders all neatly arranged in jars of scrupulous cleanliness, a few blank copper vases ready to be operated on, an invisible bird who whistled and whooped in his cage, and a case of gaily painted butterflies ready for reference when patterns were wanted. In the next room sat the manufactory—three men, five women, and two boys—all as silent as sleep. It is one thing to read of *cloissonnée* making, but quite another to watch it being made. I began to understand the cost of the ware when I saw a man working out a pattern of sprigs and butterflies on a plate about ten inches in diameter. With finest silver ribbon wire, set on edge, less than the sixteenth of an inch high, he followed the curves of the drawing at his side, pinching the wire into tendrils and the serrated outlines of leaves with infinite patience. A rough touch on the raw copper–plate would have sent the pattern flying into a thousand disconnected threads. When all was put down on the copper, the plate would be warmed just sufficiently to allow the wires to stick firmly to the copper, the pattern then showing in raised lines. Followed the colouring, which was done by little boys in spectacles. With a pair of tiniest steel chopsticks they filled from bowls at their sides each compartment of the pattern with its proper hue of paste. There is not much room allowed for error in filling the spots on a butterfly's wing with avanturine enamel when the said wings are less than an inch across. I watched the delicate play of wrist and hand till I was wearied, and the manager showed me his patterns—terrible dragons, clustered chrysanthemums, butterflies, and diapers as fine as frost on a window–pane—all drawn in unerring line. "Those things are our subjects. I compile from them, and when I want some new colours I go and look at those dead butterflies," said he. After the enamel has been filled in, the pot or plate goes to be fired, and the enamel bubbles all over the boundary lines of wires, and the whole comes from the furnace looking like delicate majolica. It may take a month to put a pattern on the plate in outline, another month to fill in the enamel, but the real expenditure of time does not commence till the polishing. A man sits down with the rough article, all his tea–things, a

tub of water, a flannel, and two or three saucers full of assorted pebbles from the brook. He does not get a wheel with tripoli, or emery, or buff. He sits down and rubs. He rubs for a month, three months, or a year. He rubs lovingly, with his soul in his finger ends, and little by little the efflorescence of the fired enamel gives way, and he comes down to the lines of silver, and the pattern in all its glory is there waiting for him. I saw a man who had only been a month over the polishing of one little vase five inches high. He would go on for two months. When I am in America he will be rubbing still, and the ruby–coloured dragon that romped on a field of lazuli, each tiny scale and whisker a separate compartment of enamel, will be growing more lovely.

"There is also cheap *cloissonnée* to be bought," said the manager, with a smile. "We cannot make that. The vase will be seventy dollars."

I respected him for saying "cannot" instead of "do not." There spoke the artist.

Our last visit was paid to the largest establishment in Kioto, where boys made gold inlay on iron, sitting in camphor–wood verandahs overlooking a garden lovelier than any that had gone before. They had been caught young, even as is the custom in India. A real grown–up man was employed on the horrible story, in iron, gold, and silver, of two priests who waked up a Rain–dragon and had to run for it, all round the edge of a big shield; but the liveliest worker of the batch was a small fat baby who had been given a tenpenny nail, a hammer, and a block of metal to play with, that he might soak in the art by which he would live, through the pores of his skin. He crowed and chuckled as he whacked. There are not many five–year–olds in England who could hammer anything without pulping their little pink fingers. The baby had learned how to hit straight. On the wall of the room hung a Japanese painting of the Apotheosis of Art. It represented with fidelity all the processes of pottery from the digging of the clay to the last firing. But all the pencilled scorn of the artist was reserved for the closing scene, where an Englishman, his arm round his wife's waist, was inspecting a shop full of curios. The Japanese are not impressed with the grace of our clothing or the beauty of our countenances. Later we beheld the manufacture of gold lacquer, which is laid on speck by speck from an agate palette fitted on the artist's thumb; and the carving of ivory, which is exciting until you begin to realise that the graver never slips.

"A lot of their art is purely mechanical" said the Professor, when he was safe back in the hotel.

"So's a lot of ours—'specially our pictures. Only we can't be spiritedly mechanical," I answered. "Fancy a people like the Japanese solemnly going in for a constitution. Observe! The only two nations

with constitution worth having are the English and the Americans. The English can only be artistic in spots and by way of the art of other nations—Sicilian tapestries, Persian saddle–bags, Khoten carpets, and the sweepings of pawn–brokers' shops. The Americans are artistic so long as a few of 'em can buy their Art to keep abreast of the times with. Spain is artistic, but she is also disturbed at intervals; France is artistic, but she must have her revolution every twenty years for the sake of fresh material; Russia is artistic, but she occasionally wishes to kill her Czar, and has no sort of Government; Germany is not artistic, because she experienced religion; and Italy is artistic, because she did very badly. India—"

"When you have finished your verdict on the world, perhaps you'll go to bed."

"Consequently," I continued, with scorn, "I am of opinion that a constitution is the worst thing in the world for a people who are blessed with souls above the average. Now the first demand of the artistic temperament is mundane uncertainty. The second is—"

"Sleep," said the Professor, and left the room.

No. XVII

Of the Nature of the Tokaido and Japanese Railway Construction. One Traveller Explains the Life of the Sahib-log, and Another the Origin of Dice. of the Babies in the Bath Tub and the Man in D. T - "When I Went to Hell I Spoke to the Man on the Road." - --old Saw.

You know the story of the miner who borrowed a dictionary and returned it with the remark that the stories, though interesting in the main, were too various. I have the same complaint to make against Japanese scenery—twelve hours of it by train from Nagoya to Yokohama. About seven hundred years ago the king of those days built a sea–road which he called the Tokaido (or else all the sea–coast was called the Tokaido, but it's of no importance), which road endures to the present. Later on, when the English engineer appeared, he followed the Grand Trunk more or less closely, and the result has been a railway that any nation might take off their hat to. The last section of the through line from Kioto to Yokohama was only opened five days before the Professor and I honoured it with an unofficial inspection.

The accommodation of all kinds is arranged for the benefit of the Japanese; and this is distressing to the foreigner, who expects in a carriage remotely resembling E. I. R. rolling–stock the conveniences of that pea–green and very dusty old line. But it suits the Japanese admirably: they hop out at every other station—*pro re nata*—and occasionally get left behind. Two days ago they managed to kill a Government official of high standing between a footboard and a platform, and to–day the Japanese papers are seriously discussing the advantages of lavatories. Far be it from me to interfere with the arrangements of an artistic empire; but for a twelve hours' run there might at least be arrangements.

We had left the close–packed cultivation at the foot of the hills and were running along the shores of a great lake, all steel–blue from one end to the other, except where it was dotted with little islands. Then the lake turned into an arm of the sea, and we ran across it on a cut–stone causeway, and the profligacy of the pines ceased, as the trees had to come down from clothing dank hills, and fight with bowed head, outstretched arms, and firmly planted feet, against the sands of the Pacific, whose breakers were spouting and blowing not a quarter of a mile away from the causeway. The Japs know all about forestry. They stake down wandering sand–torrents, which are still allowed to ruin our crops in the Hoshiarpur district, and they plug a shifting sand–dune with wattle dams and pine seedlings as cleverly as

they would pin plank to plank. Were their forest officers trained at Nancy, or are they local products? The stake–binding used to hold the sand is of French pattern, and the diagonal planting out of the trees is also French.

Half a minute after the train dropped this desolate, hardly controlled beach it raced through four or five miles of the suburbs of Patna, but a clean and glorified Patna bowered in bamboo plantations. Then it hit a tunnel and sailed forth into a section of the London, Brighton, and South Coast, or whatever the line is that wants to make the Channel tunnel. At any rate, the embankment was on the beach, and the waves lapped the foot of it, and there was a wall of cut rock to landward. Then we disturbed many villages of fishermen, whose verandahs gave on to the track, and whose nets lay almost under our wheels. The railway was still a new thing in that particular part of the world, for mothers held up their babes to see it.

Any one can keep pace with Indian scenery, arranged as it is in reaches of five hundred miles. This blinding alternation of field, mountain, sea–beach, forest, bamboo grove, and rolling moor covered with azalea blossoms was too much for me, so I sought the society of a man who had lived in Japan for twenty years.

"Yes, Japan's an excellent country as regards climate. The rains begin in May or latter April. June, July, and August are hot months. I've known the thermometer as high as 86° at night, but I'd defy the world to produce anything more perfect than the weather between September and May. When one gets seedy, one goes to the hot springs in the Hakone mountains close to Yokohama. There are heaps of places to recruit in, but we English are a healthy lot. Of course we don't have half as much fun as you do in India. We are a small community, and all our amusements are organised by ourselves for our own benefit—concerts, races, and amateur theatricals and the like. You have heaps of 'em in India, haven't you?"

"Oh, yes!" I said, "we enjoy ourselves awfully, 'specially about this time of the year. I quite understand, though, that small communities dependent on themselves for enjoyment are apt to feel a little slow and isolated—almost bored, in fact. But you were saying—?"

"Well, living is not very dear, and house rent is. A hundred dollars a month gets you a decent house and you can get one for sixty. But house property is down just now in Yokohama. The races are on in Yokohama to–day and Monday. Are you going? No? You ought to go and see all the foreigners enjoying themselves. But I suppose you've seen much better things in India, haven't you? You haven't anything better than old Fuji—Fujiyama. There he is now to the left of the line. What do you think of him?"

I turned and beheld Fujiyama across a sea of upward–sloping

fields and woods. It is about fourteen thousand feet high—not very much, according to our ideas. But fourteen thousand feet above the sea when one stands in the midst of sixteen–thousand–foot peaks, is quite another thing from the same height noted at sea–level in a comparatively flat country. The labouring eye crawls up every foot of the dead crater's smooth flank, and at the summit confesses that it has seen nothing in all the Himalayas to match the monster. I was satisfied. Fujiyama was exactly as I had seen it on fans and lacquer boxes; I would not have sold my sight of it for the crest of Kinchinjunga flushed with the morning. Fujiyama is the keynote of Japan. When you understand the one you are in a position to learn something about the other. I tried to get information from my fellow–traveller.

"Yes, the Japanese are building railways all over the island. What I mean to say is that the companies are started and financed by Japs, and they make 'em pay. I can't quite tell you where the money comes from, but it's all to be found in the country. Japan's neither rich nor poor, but just comfortable. I'm a merchant myself. Can't say that I altogether like the Jap way o' doing business. You can never be certain whether the little beggar means what he says. Give me a Chinaman to deal with. Other men have told you that, have they? You'll find that opinion at most of the treaty ports. But what I will say is, that the Japanese Government is about as enterprising a Government as you could wish, and a good one to have dealings with. When Japan has finished reconstructing herself on the new lines, she'll be quite a respectable little Power. See if she isn't. Now we are coming into the Hakone mountains. Watch the railway. It's rather a curiosity."

We came into the Hakone mountains by way of some Irish scenery, a Scotch trout–stream, a Devonshire combe, and an Indian river running masterless over half a mile of pebbles. This was only the prelude to a set of geological illustrations, including the terraces formed by ancient river–beds, denudation, and half a dozen other ations. I was so busy telling the man from Yokohama lies about the height of the Himalayas that I did not watch things closely, till we got to Yokohama, at eight in the evening, and went to the Grand Hotel, where all the clean and nicely dressed people who were just going in to dinner regarded us with scorn, and men, whom we had met on steamers aforetime, dived into photograph books and pretended not to see us. There's a deal of human nature in a man—got up for dinner—when a woman is watching him—and you look like a brick–layer—even in Yokohama.

The Grand is the Semi or Cottage Grand really, but you had better go there unless a friend tells you of a better. A long course of good luck has spoiled me for even average hotels. They are too fine and

large at the Grand, and they don't always live up to their grandeur; unlimited electric bells, but no one in particular to answer 'em; printed menu, but the first comers eat all the nice things, and so forth. None the less there are points about the Grand not to be despised. It is modelled on the American fashion, and is but an open door through which you may catch the first gust from the Pacific slope. Officially, there are twice as many English as Americans in the port. Actually, you hear no languages but French, German, or American in the street. My experience is sadly limited, but the American I have heard up to the present, is a tongue as distinct from English as Patagonian.

A gentleman from Boston was kind enough to tell me something about it. He defended the use of "I guess" as a Shakespearian expression to be found in *Richard the Third*. I have learned enough never to argue with a Bostonian.

"All right," I said, "I've never heard a real American say 'I guess'; but what about the balance of your extraordinary tongue? Do you mean to say that it has anything in common with ours except the auxiliary verbs, the name of the Creator, and Damn? Listen to the men at the next table."

"They are Westerners," said the man from Boston, as who should say "observe this cassowary." "They are Westerners, and if you want to make a Westerner mad tell him he is not like an Englishman. They think they are like the English. They are awfully thin–skinned in the West. Now in Boston it's different. *We* don't care what the English people think of us."

The idea of the English people sitting down to think about Boston, while Boston on the other side of the water ostentatiously "didn't care," made me snigger. The man told me stories. He belonged to a Republic. That was why every man of his acquaintance belonged either "to one of the first families in Boston" or else "was of good Salem stock, and his fathers had come over in the *Mayflower*." I felt as though I were moving in the midst of a novel. Fancy having to explain to the casual stranger the blood and breeding of the hero of every anecdote. I wonder whether many people in Boston are like my friend with the Salem families. I am going there to see.

"There's no romance in America—it's all hard, business facts," said a man from the Pacific slope, after I had expressed my opinion about some rather curious murder cases which might have been called miscarriages of justice. Ten minutes later, I heard him say slowly, *apropos* of a game called "Round the Horn" (this is a bad game. Don't play it with a stranger.) "Well, it's a good thing for this game that Omaha came up. Dice were invented in Omaha, and the man who invented 'em he made a colossal fortune."

I said nothing. I began to feel faint. The man must have noticed it.

"Six–and–twenty years ago, Omaha came up," he repeated, looking me in the eye, "and the number of dice that have been made in Omaha since that time is incalculable."

"There is no romance in America," I moaned like a stricken ring–dove, in the Professor's ear. "Nothing but hard business facts, and the first families of Boston, Massachusetts, invented dice at Omaha when it first came up, twenty–six years ago, and that's the solid truth. What am I to do with a people like this?"

"Are you describing Japan or America? For goodness' sake, stick to one or the other," said the Professor.

"It wasn't my fault. There's a bit of America in the bar–room, and on my word it's rather more interesting than Japan. Let's go across to 'Frisco and hear some more lies."

"Let's go and look at photographs, and refrain from mixing our countries or our drinks."

By the way, wherever you go in the Further East be humble to the white trader. Recollect that you are only a poor beast of a buyer with a few dirty dollars in your pockets, and you can't expect a man to demean himself by taking them. And observe humility not only in the shops, but elsewhere. I was anxious to know how I should cross the Pacific to 'Frisco, and very foolishly went to an office where they might, under certain circumstances, be supposed to attend to these things. But no anxiety troubled the sprightly soul who happened to be in the office–chair. "There's heaps of time for finding out later on," he said, "and anyhow, I'm going to the races this afternoon. Come later on." I put my head in the spittoon, and crawled out under the door.

When I am left behind by the steamer it will console me to know that that young man had a good time, and won heavily. Everybody keeps horses in Yokohama, and the horses are nice little fat little tubs, of the circus persuasion. I didn't go to the races, but a Calcutta man did, and returned saying that "they ran 13–2 cart–horses, and even time for a mile was four minutes and twenty–seven seconds." Perhaps he had lost heavily, but I can vouch for the riding of the few gentlemen I saw outside the animals. It is very impartial and remarkably all round.

Just when the man from Boston was beginning to tell me some more stories about first families, the Professor developed an unholy taste for hot springs, and bore me off to a place called Myanoshita to wash myself. "We'll come back and look at Yokohama later on, but we must go to this because it's so beautiful."

"I'm getting tired of scenery. It's all beautiful and it can't be described, but these men here tell you stories about America. Did you ever hear how the people of Carmel lynched Edward M. Petree for preaching the gospel without making a collection at the end of the

service? There's no romance in America—it's all hard business facts. Edward M. Petree was—"

"*Are* you going to see Japan or are you not?"

I went to see. First in a train for one hour in the company of a carriageful of howling Globe–trotters, then in a 'rickshaw for four. You cannot appreciate scenery unless you sit in a 'rickshaw. We struck after seven miles of modified flat—the flattery of Nature that lures you to her more rugged heart—a mountain river all black pools and boiling foam. Him we followed into the hills along a road cut into the crumbling volcanic rock and entirely unmetalled. It was as hard as the Simla cartroad, but those far hills behind Kalka have no such pine and maple, ash and willow. It was a land of green–clothed cliff and silver waterfall, lovely beyond the defilement of the pen. At every turn in the road whence a view could be commanded, stood a little tea–house full of admiring Japanese. The Jap dresses in blue because he knows that it contrasts well with the colour of the pines. When he dies he goes to a heaven of his own because the colouring of ours is too crude to suit him.

We kept the valley of the glorified stream till the waters sank out of sight down the cliff side and we could but hear them calling to one another through the tangle of the trees. Where the woodlands were lovelier, the gorge deepest, and the colours of the young hornbeam most tender, they had clapped down two vile hostelries of wood and glass, and a village that lived by selling turned wood and glass inlay things to the tourist.

Australians, Anglo–Indians, dwellers in London and the parts beyond the Channel were running up and down the slopes of the hotel garden, and by their strange dresses doing all they knew to deface the landscape. The Professor and I slid down the cliff at the back and found ourselves back in Japan once more. Rough steps took us five or six hundred feet down through dense jungle to the bed of that stream we had followed all the day. The air vibrated with the rush of a hundred torrents, and whenever the eye could pierce the undergrowth it saw a headlong stream breaking itself on a boulder. Up at the hotel we had left the gray chill of a November day and cold that numbed the fingers; down in the gorge we found the climate of Bengal with real steam thrown in. Green bamboo pipes led the hot water to a score of bathing–houses in whose verandahs Japanese in blue and white dressing–gowns lounged and smoked. From unseen thickets came the shouts of those who bathed, and—oh shame! round the corner strolled a venerable old lady chastely robed in a white bathing towel, and not too much of that. Then we went up the gorge, mopping our brows, and staring to the sky through arches of rampant foliage.

Japanese maids of fourteen or fifteen are not altogether

displeasing to behold. I have not seen more than twenty or thirty of them. Of these none were in the least disconcerted at the sight of the stranger. After all, 'twas but Brighton beach without the bathing–gowns. At the head of the gorge the heat became greater, and the hot water more abundant. The joints of the water–pipes on the ground gave off jets of steam; there was vapour rising from boulders on the river–bed, and the stab of a stick into the warm, moist soil was followed by a little pool of warm water. The existing supply was not enough for the inhabitants. They were mining for more in a casual and disconnected fashion. I tried to crawl down a shaft eighteen inches by two feet in the hillside, but the steam, which had no effect on the Japanese hide, drove me out. What happens, I wonder, when the pick strikes the liquid, and the miner has to run or be parboiled?

In the twilight, when we had reached upper earth once more and were passing through the one street of Myanoshita, we saw two small fat cherubs about three years old taking their evening tub in a barrel sunk under the eaves of a shop. They feigned great fear, peeping at us behind outspread fingers, attempting futile dives, and trying to hide one behind the other in a hundred poses of spankable chubbiness, while their father urged them to splash us. It was the prettiest picture of the day, and one worth coming even to the sticky, paint–reeking hotel to see.

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He was dressed in a black frock–coat, and at first I took him for a missionary as he mooned up and down the empty corridor.

"I have been under a ban for three days," he whispered in a husky voice, "through no fault of mine—no fault of mine. They told me to take the third watch, but they didn't give me a printed notification which I always require, and the manager of this place says that whisky would hurt me. Through no fault of mine, God knows, no fault of mine!"

I do not like being shut up in an echoing wooden hotel next door to a gentleman of the marine persuasion, who is just recovering from D. T., and who talks to himself all through the dark hours.

No. XVIII

Concerning a Hot-water Tap, and Some General Conversation - "Always Speak to the Stranger. if He Doesn't Shoot, the Chances Are He'LL Answer You."--western Proverb.

It is a far cry from Myanoshita to Michni and Mandalay. That is why we have met men from both those stations, and have spent a cheerful time talking about dacoits and the Black Mountain Expedition. One of the advantages of foreign travel is that one takes such a keen interest in, and hears so much about, Home. Truly, they change their trains, but not their train of thought, who run across the sea.

"This is a most extraordinary place," said the Professor, red as a boiled lobster. "You sit in your bath and turn on the hot or cold spring, as you choose, and the temperature is phenomenal. Let's go and see where it all comes from, and then let's go away."

There is a place called the Burning Mountain five miles in the hills. There went we, through unbroken loveliness of bamboo–copse, pine wood, grass downs, and pine wood again, while the river growled below. In the end we found an impoverished and second–hand Hell, set out orderly on the side of a raw and bleeding hillside. It looked as though a match–factory had been whelmed by a landslip. Water, in which bad eggs had been boiled, stood in blister–lipped pools, and puffs of thin white smoke went up from the labouring under–earth. Despite the smell and the sulphur incrustations on the black rocks, I was disappointed, till I felt the heat of the ground, which was the heat of a boiler–sheathing. They call the mountain extinct. If untold tons of power, cased in a few feet of dirt, be the Japanese notion of extinction, glad I am that I have not been introduced to a lively volcano. Indeed, it was not an overweening notion of my own importance, but a tender regard for the fire–crust below, and a dread of starting the machinery by accident, that made me step so delicately, and urge return upon the Professor.

"Huh! It's only the boiler of your morning bath. All the sources of the springs are here," said he.

"I don't care. Let 'em alone. Did you never hear of a boiler bursting? Don't prod about with your stick in that amateur way. You'll turn on the tap."

When you have seen a burning mountain you begin to appreciate Japanese architecture. It is not solid. Every one is burned out once or twice casually. A business isn't respectable until it has received its baptism of fire. But fire is of no importance. The one thing that inconveniences a Jap is an earthquake. Consequently, he arranges his

house that it shall fall lightly as a bundle of broom upon his head. Still further safeguarding himself, he has no foundations, but the corner–posts rest on the crowns of round stones sunk in the earth. The corner–posts take the wave of the shock, and, though the building may give way like an eel–trap, nothing very serious happens. This is what epicures of earthquakes aver. I wait for mine own experiences, but not near a suspected district such as the Burning Mountain.

It was only to escape from one terror to another that I fled Myanoshita. A blue–breeched dwarf thrust me into a dwarf 'rickshaw on spidery wheels, and down the rough road that we had taken four hours to climb ran me clamorously in half an hour. Take all the parapets off the Simla Road and leave it alone for ten years. Then run down the steepest four miles of any section,—not steeper than the drop to the old Gaiety Theatre,—behind one man!

"We couldn't get six hill–men to take us in this style," shouted the Professor as he spun by, his wheels kicking like a duck's foot, and the whole contraption at an angle of thirty. I am proud to think that not even sixty hill–men would have gambolled with a sahib in that disgraceful manner. Nor would any tramway company in the Real East have run its cars to catch a train that used to start last year, but now—rest its soul—is as dead as Queen Anne. This thing a queer little seven–mile tramway accomplished with much dignity. It owned a first–class car and a second–class car,—two horses to each,—and it ran them with a hundred yards headway—the one all but empty, and the other half full. When the very small driver could not control his horses, which happened on the average once every two minutes, he did not waste time by pulling them in. He screwed down the brake and laughed—possibly at the company who had paid for the very elaborate car. Yet he was an artistic driver. He wore no Philistine brass badge. Between the shoulders of his blue jerkin were done in white, three railheads in a circle, and on the skirts as many tram–wheels conventionalised. Only the Japanese know how to conventionalise a tram–wheel or make a key–pattern of railheads. Though we took twelve hours to cover the thirty miles that separated us from Yokohama, we admitted this much while we waited for our train in a village by the sea. A village of any size is about three miles long in the main street. Villages with a population of more than ten thousand souls take rank as towns.

"And yet," said a man at Yokohama that night, "you have not seen the densest population. That's away in the western *kens*—districts, as you call them. The folk really are crowded thereabouts, but virtually poverty does not exist in the country. You see, an agricultural labourer can maintain himself and his family, as far as rice goes, for four cents a day, and the price of fish is nominal. Rice now costs a hundred

pounds to the dollar. What do you make it by Indian standards? From twenty to twenty–five seers the rupee. Yes, that's about it. Well, he gets, perhaps, three dollars and a–half a month. The people spend a good deal in pleasuring. They must enjoy themselves. I don't think they save much. How do they invest their savings? In jewellery? No, not exactly; though you'll find that the women's hair–pins, which are about the only jewellery they wear, cost a good deal. Seven and eight dollars are paid for a good hair–pin, and of course jade may cost anything. What the women really lock their money up in is in their *obis*—the things you call sashes. An *obi* is ten or twelve yards long, and I've known them sold wholesale for fifty dollars each. Every woman above the poorest class has at least one good dress of silk and an *obi*. Yes, all their savings go in dress, and a handsome dress is always worth having. The western *kens* are the richest taken all round. A skilled mechanic there gets a dollar or dollar and a–half a day, and, as you know, lacquer–workers and inlayers—artists—get two. There's enough money in Japan for all current expenses. They won't borrow any for railroads. They raise it 'emselves. Most progressive people the Japanese are as regards railways. They make them very cheaply, much more cheaply than any European lines. I've some experience, and I take it that two thousand pounds a mile is the average cost of construction. Not on the Tokaido, of course—the line that you came up by. That's a Government line, State built, and a very expensive one. I'm speaking of the Japanese Railway Company with a mileage of three hundred, and the line from Kobé south, and the Kinshin line in the Southern island. There are lots of little companies with a few score miles of line, but all the companies are extending. The reason why the construction is so cheap is the nature of the land. There's no long haulage of rails, because you can nearly always find a creek running far up into the country, and dump out your rails within a few miles of the place where they are wanted. Then, again, all your timber lies to your hand, and your staff are Japs. There are a few European engineers, but they are quite the heads of the departments, and I believe if they were cleared out to–morrow, the Japs would go on building their lines. They know how to make 'em pay. One line started on a State guarantee of eight per cent. It hasn't called for the guarantee yet. It's making twelve per cent on its own hook. There's a very heavy freight traffic in wood and provisions for the big towns, and there's a local traffic that you can have no idea of unless you've watched it. The people seem to move in twenty–mile circles for business or pleasure—'specially pleasure. Oh, I tell you, Japan will be a gridiron of railways before long. In another month or two you'll be able to travel nearly seven hundred miles on and by the Tokaido line alone from one end to the other, of the central islands. Getting from

east to west is harder work. The backbone–hills of the country are just cruel, and it will be some time before the Japs run many lines across. But they'll do it, of course. Their country must go forward.

"If you want to know anything about their politics, I'm afraid I can't help you much. They are, so to speak, drunk with Western liquor, and are sucking it up by the hogshead. In a few years they will see how much of what we call civilisation they really want, and how much they can discard. 'Tisn't as if they had to learn the arts of life or how to make themselves comfortable. They knew all that long ago. When their railway system is completed, and they begin to understand their new Constitution, they will have learned as much as we can teach 'em. That's my opinion; but it needs time to understand this country. I've been a matter of eight or ten years in it, and my views aren't worth much. I've come to know some of the old families that used to be of the feudal nobility. They keep themselves to themselves and live very quietly. I don't think you'll find many of them in the official classes. Their one fault is that they entertain far beyond their means. They won't receive you informally and take you into their houses. They raise dancing–girls, or take you to their club and have a big feed. They don't introduce you to their wives, and they haven't yet given up the rule of making the wife eat after the husband. Like the native of India you say? Well, I am very fond of the Jap; but I suppose he *is* a native any way you look at him. You wouldn't think that he is careless in his workmanship and dishonest. A Chinaman, on an average, is out and away a bigger rogue than a Jap; but he has sense enough to see that honesty is the best policy, and to act by that light. A Jap will be dishonest just to save himself trouble. He's like a child that way."

How many times have I had to record such an opinion as the foregoing? Everywhere the foreigner says the same thing of the neat–handed, polite little people that live among flowers and babies, and smoke tobacco as mild as their own manners. I am sorry; but when you come to think of it, a race without a flaw would be perfect. And then all the other nations of the earth would rise up and hammer it to pieces. And then there would be no Japan.

"I'll give you a day to think over things generally," said the Professor. "After that we'll go to Nikko and Tokio. Who has not seen Nikko does not know how to pronounce the world 'beautiful.'"

Yokohama is not the proper place to arrange impressions in. The Pacific Ocean knocks at your door, asking to be looked at; the Japanese and American men–of–war demand serious attention through a telescope; and if you wander about the corridors of the Grand Hotel, you stop to play with Spanish Generals, all gold lace and spurs, or are captured by touts for curio–shops. It is not a nice

experience to find a Sahib in a Panama hat handing you the card of his firm for all the world like a Delhi silk–merchant. You are inclined to pity that man, until he sits down, gives you a cigar, and tells you all about his diseases, his past career in California, where he was always making money and always losing it, and his hopes for the future. You see then that you are entering upon a new world. Talk to every one you meet, if they show the least disposition to talk to you, and you will gather, as I have done, a host of stories that will be of use to you hereafter. Unfortunately, they are not all fit for publication. When I tore myself away from the distractions of the outer world, and was just sitting down to write seriously on the Future of Japan, there entered a fascinating man, with heaps of money, who had collected Indian and Japanese curios all his life, and was now come to this country to get some old books which his collection lacked. Can you imagine a more pleasant life than his wanderings over the earth, with untold special knowledge to back each signature of his cheque–book?

In five minutes he had carried me far away from the clattering, fidgetty folk around, to a quiet world where men meditated for three weeks over a bronze, and scoured all Japan for a sword–guard designed by a great artist and—were horribly cheated in the end.

"Who is the best artist in Japan now?" I asked.

"He died in Tokio, last Friday, poor fellow, and there is no one to take his place. His name was K—, and as a general rule he could never be persuaded to work unless he was drunk. He did his best pictures when he was drunk."

"*Ému.* Artists are never drunk."

"Quite right. I'll show you a sword–guard that he designed. All the best artists out here do a lot of designing. K— used to fritter away his time on designs for old friends. Had he stuck to pictures he could have made twice as much. But he never turned out potboilers. When you go to Tokio, make it your business to get two little books of his called *Drunken Sketches*—pictures that he did, when he was—*ému*. There is enough dash and go in them to fill half a dozen studios. An English artist studied under him for some time. But K—'s touch was not communicable, though he might have taught his pupil something about technique. Have you ever come across one of K—'s crows? You could tell it anywhere. He could put all the wicked thoughts that ever came into the mind of a crow—and a crow is first cousin to the Devil —on a piece of paper six inches square, with a brush of Indian ink and two turns of his wrist. Look at the sword–guard I spoke of. How is that for feeling?"

On a circular piece of iron four inches in diameter and pierced by the pole for the tang of the blade, poor K—, who died last Friday, had sketched the figure of a coolie trying to fold up a cloth which was

bellying to a merry breeze—not a cold wind, but a sportive summer gust. The coolie was enjoying the performance, and so was the cloth. It would all be folded up in another minute and the coolie would go on his way with a grin.

This thing had K— conceived, and the faithful workman executed, with the lightest touches of the graver, to the end that it might lie in a collector's cabinet in London.

"Wah! Wah!" I said, and returned it reverently. "It would kill a man who could do that to live after his touch had gone. Well for him he died—but I wish I had seen him. Show me some more."

"I've got a painting by Hokusai—the great artist who lived at the end of the last century and the beginning of this. Even *you* have heard of Hokusai, haven't you?"

"A little. I have heard it was impossible to get a genuine painting with his signature attached."

"That's true; but I've shown this one to the Japanese Government expert in pictures—the man the Mikado consults in cases of doubt—to the first European authority on Japanese art, and of course I have my own opinion to back the signed guarantee of the seller. Look!"

He unrolled a silk–scroll and showed me the figure of a girl in pale blue and grey crêpe, carrying in her arms a bundle of clothes that, as the tub behind her showed, had just been washed. A dark–blue handkerchief was thrown lightly over the left forearm, shoulder, and neck, ready to tie up the clothes when the bundle should be put down. The flesh of the right arm showed through the thin drapery of the sleeve. The right hand merely steadied the bundle from above; the left gripped it firmly from below. Through the stiff blue–black hair showed the outline of the left ear.

That there was enormous elaboration in the picture, from the ornamentation of the hair–pins to the graining of the clogs, did not strike me till after the first five minutes, when I had sufficiently admired the certainty of touch.

"Recollect there is no room for error in painting on silk," said the proud possessor. "The line must stand under any circumstances. All that is possible before painting is a little dotting with charcoal, which is rubbed off with a feather–brush. Did he know anything about drapery or colour or the shape of a woman? Is there any one who could teach him more if he were alive to–day?"

Then we went to Nikko.

No. XIX

The Legend of Nikko Ford and the Story of the Avoidance of Misfortune - A Rose-red City, Half as Old as Time

Five hours in the train took us to the beginning of a 'rickshaw journey of twenty–five miles. The guide unearthed an aged cart on Japanese lines, and seduced us into it by promises of speed and comfort beyond anything that a 'rickshaw could offer. Never go to Nikko in a cart. The town of departure is full of pack–ponies who are not used to it, and every third animal tries to get a kick at his friends in the shafts. This renders progress sufficiently exciting till the bumpsomeness of the road quenches all emotions save one. Nikko is reached through one avenue of *cryptomerias*—cypress–like trees eighty feet high, with red or dull silver trunks and hearse–plume foliage of darkest green. When I say one avenue, I mean one continuous avenue twenty–five miles long, the trees so close to each other throughout that their roots interlace and form a wall of wood on either side of the sunken road. Where it was necessary to make a village along the line of march,—that is to say once every two or three miles,—a few of the giants had been wrenched out—as teeth are wrenched from a full–planted jaw—to make room for the houses. Then the trees closed up as before to mount guard over the road. The banks between which we drove were alight with azaleas, camelias, and violets. "Glorious! Stupendous! Magnificent!" sang the Professor and I in chorus for the first five miles, in the intervals of the bumps. The avenue took not the least notice of our praise except by growing the trees even more closely together. "Vistas of pillared shade" are very pleasant to read about, but on a cold day the ungrateful heart of man could cheerfully dispense with a mile or two of it if that would shorten the journey. We were blind to the beauty around; to the files of pack–ponies with manes like hearth–brooms and the tempers of Eblis kicking about the path; to the pilgrims with blue and white handkerchiefs on their heads, enviable silver–grey leggings on their feet, and Buddha–like babies on their backs; to the trim country drays pulled by miniature cart–horses bringing down copper from the mines and *saki* from the hills; to the colour and movement in the villages where all the little children shouted "Ohio's!" and all the old people laughed. The grey tree–trunks marched us solemnly along over that horrid bad road which had been mended with brushwood, and after five hours we got Nikko in the shape of a long village at the foot of a hill, and capricious Nature, to reward us for our sore bones, laughed on the instant in floods of sunshine. And upon what a mad scene did the light fall! The *cryptomerias* rose in front of us a wall of green darkness, a tearing

torrent ran deep–green over blue boulders, and between stream and trees was thrown a blood–red bridge—the sacred bridge of red lacquer that no foot save the Mikado's may press.

Very cunning artists are the Japanese. Long ago a great–hearted king came to Nikko River and looked across at the trees, up–stream at the torrent and the hills whence it came, and down–stream at the softer outlines of the crops and spurs of wooded mountains. "It needs only a dash of colour in the foreground to bring this all together," said he, and he put a little child in a blue and white dressing–gown under the awful trees to judge the effect. Emboldened by his tenderness, an aged beggar ventured to ask for alms. Now it was the ancient privilege of the great to try the temper of their blades upon beggars and such cattle. Mechanically the king swept off the old man's head, for he did not wish to be disturbed. The blood spurted across the granite slabs of the river–ford in a sheet of purest vermilion. The king smiled. Chance had solved the problem for him. "Build a bridge here," he said to the court carpenter, "of just such a colour as that stuff on the stones. Build also a bridge of grey stone close by, for I would not forget the wants of my people." So he gave the little child across the stream a thousand pieces of gold and went his way. He had composed a landscape. As for the blood, they wiped it up and said no more about it; and that is the story of Nikko Bridge. You will not find it in the guide–books.

I followed the voice of the river through a rickety toy–village, across some rough bottom–land, till, crossing a bridge, I found myself among lichened stones, scrub, and the blossoms of spring. A hillside, steep and wooded as the flanks of the red Aravallis, rose on my left; on my right, the eye travelled from village to cropland, crop to towering cypress, and rested at last on the cold blue of an austere hill–top encircled by streaks of yet unmelted snow. The Nikko hotel stood at the foot of this hill; and the time of the year was May. Then a sparrow came by with a piece of grass in her beak, for she was building her nest; and I knew that the spring was come to Nikko. One is so apt to forget the changes of the year over there with you in India.

Sitting in a solemn line on the banks of the river were fifty or sixty cross–legged images which the untrained eye put down immediately as so many small Buddhas. They had all, even when the lichen had cloaked them with leprosy, the calm port and unwinking regard of the Lord of the World. They are not Buddhas really, but other things—presents from forgotten great men to dead and gone institutions, or else memorials of ancestors. The guide–book will tell you. They were a ghostly crew. As I examined them more closely I saw that each differed from the other. Many of them held in their joined arms a little store of river pebbles, evidently put there by the pious. When I inquired the meaning of the gift from a stranger who

passed, he said: "Those so distinguished are images of the God who Plays with Little Children up in the Sky. He tells them stories and builds them houses of pebbles. The stones are put in his arms either that he may not forget to amuse the babies or to prevent his stock running low."

I have no means of telling whether the stranger spoke the truth, but I prefer to believe that tale as gospel truth. Only the Japanese could invent the God who Plays with Little Children. Thereafter the images took a new aspect in my eyes and were no longer "Græco–Buddhist sculptures," but personal friends. I added a great heap of pebbles to the stock of the cheeriest among them. His bosom was ornamented with small printed slips of prayers which gave him the appearance of a disreputable old parson with his bands in disorder. A little further up the bank of the river was a rough, solitary rock hewn with what men called a Shinto shrine. I knew better: the thing was Hindu, and I looked at the smooth stones on every side for the familiar dab of red paint. On a flat rock overhanging the water were carved certain characters in Sanscrit, remotely resembling those on a Thibetan prayer–wheel. Not comprehending these matters, and grateful that I had brought no guide–book with me, I clambered down to the lip of the river—now compressed into a raging torrent. Do you know the Strid near Bolton—that spot where the full force of the river is pent up in two yards' breadth? The Nikko Strid is an improvement upon the Yorkshire one. The blue rocks are hollowed like soapstone by the rush of the water. They rise above head–level and in spring are tufted with azalea blossom. The stranger of the godlings came up behind me as I basked on a boulder. He pointed up the little gorge of rocks, "Now if I painted that as it stands, every critic in the papers would say I was a liar."

The mad stream came down directly from a blue hill blotched with pink, through a sky–blue gorge also pink–blotched. An obviously impossible pine mounted guard over the water. I would give much to see an accurate representation of that view. The stranger departed growling over some hidden grief—connected with the Academy perhaps.

Hounded on by the Professor, the guide sought me by banks of the river and bade me "come and see temples." Then I fairly and squarely cursed all temples, being stretched at my ease on some warm sand in the hollow of a rock, and ignorant as the grass–shod cattle that tramped the further bank. "Very fine temples," said the guide, "you come and see. By and by temple be shut up because priests make half an hour more time." Nikko time is half an hour ahead of the standard, because the priests of the temples have discovered that travellers arriving at three p.m. try to do all the temples before four—

the official–hour of closing. This defrauds the church of her dues, so her servants put the clock on, and Nikko, knowing naught of the value of time, is well content.

When I cursed the temples I did a foolish thing, and one for which this poor pen can never make fitting reparation. We went up a hill by way of a flight of grey stone slabs. The *cryptomerias* of the Nikko road were as children to the giants that overshadowed us here. Between their iron–grey boles were flashes of red—the blood–red of the Mikado's bridge. That great king who killed the beggar at the ford had been well pleased with the success of his experiment. Passing under a mighty stone arch we came into a square of splendour alive with the sound of hammers. Thirty or forty men were tapping the pillars and steps of a carnelian shrine heavy with gold. "That," said the guide, impassively, "is a godown. They are renewing the lacquer. First they extract it."

Have you ever "extracted" lacquer from wood? I smote the foot of a pillar with force, and after half a dozen blows chipped off one small fragment of the stuff, in texture like red horn. Betraying no surprise, I demanded the name of a yet more magnificent shrine across the courtyard. It was red lacquered like the others, but above its main door were carved in open work three apes—one with his hands to his ears, another covering his mouth, and a third blinding his eyes.

"That place," said the guide, "used to be a stable when the Daimio kept his horses there. The monkeys are the three who hear no wrong, say no wrong, and see no wrong."

"Of course," I said. "What a splendid device for a stable where the grooms steal the grain!" I was angry because I had grovelled before a godown and a stable, though the round world cannot hold their equals.

We entered a temple, or a tomb, I do not know which, through a gateway of carven pillars. Eleven of them bore a running pattern of trefoil—the apex pointing earthward—the twelfth had its pattern reversed.

"Make 'em all the same—no good," said the guide, emphatically. "Something sure to come bad by an' by. Make one different all right. Save him so. Nothing happen then."

Unless I am mistaken, that voluntarily breaking of the set was the one sacrifice that the designer had made to the great Gods above who are so jealous of the craft of men. For the rest he had done what he pleased—even as a god might have done—with the wood in its gleaming lacquer sheath, with enamel and inlay and carving and bronze, hammered work, and the work of the inspired chisel. When he went to his account he saved himself from the jealousy of his judges, by pointing to the trefoil pillars for proof that he was only a weak

mortal and in no sense their equals. Men say that never man has given complete drawings, details, or descriptions of the temples of Nikko. Only a German would try, and he would fail in spirit. Only a Frenchman could succeed in spirit, but he would be inaccurate. I have a recollection of passing through a door with *cloisonnée* hinges, with a golden lintel and red lacquer jambs, with panels of tortoise–shell lacquer and clamps of bronze tracery. It opened into a half–lighted hall on whose blue ceiling a hundred golden dragons romped and spat fire. A priest moved about the gloom with noiseless feet, and showed me a pot–bellied lantern four feet high, that the Dutch traders of old time had sent as a present to the temple. There were posts of red lacquer dusted over with gold, to support the roof. On one post lay a rib of lacquer, six inches thick, that had been carved or punched over with high relief carvings and had set harder than crystal.

The temple steps were of black lacquer, and the frames of the sliding screens red. That money, lakhs and lakhs of money, had been lavished on the wonder impressed me but little. I wished to know who were the men that, when the *cryptomerias* were saplings, had sat down and spent their lives on a niche or corner of the temple, and dying passed on the duty of adornment to their sons, though neither father nor child hoped to see the work completed. This question I asked the guide, who plunged me in a tangle of Daimios and Shoguns, all manifestly extracted from a guide–book.

After a while the builder's idea entered into my soul.

He had said: "Let us build blood–red chapels in a Cathedral." So they planted the Cathedral three hundred years ago, knowing that tree–boles would make the pillars and the sky the roof.

Round each temple stood a small army of priceless bronze or stone lanterns, stamped, as was everything else, with the three leaves that make the Daimio's crest. The lanterns were dark green or lichened grey, and in no way lightened the gloom of the red. Down below, by the sacred bridge, I believed red was a joyous colour. Up the hillside under the trees and the shadow of the temple eaves I saw that it was the hue of sorrow. When the great king killed the beggar at the ford he did not laugh, as I have said. He was very sorry, and said: "Art is Art, and worth any sacrifice. Take that corpse away and pray for the naked soul." Once, in one of the temple courtyards, nature dared to rebel against the scheme of the hillside. Some forest tree, all unimpressed by the *cryptomerias*, had tossed a torrent of tenderest pink flowers down the face of a grey retaining wall that guarded a cutting. It was as if a child had laughed aloud at some magnificence it could not understand.

"You see that cat?" said the guide, pointing out a pot–bellied pussy painted above a door. "That is the Sleeping Cat. The artist he

paint it left–handed. We are proud of that cat."

"And did they let him remain left–handed after he had painted that thing?"

"Oh yes. You see he was always left–handed."

The infinite tenderness of the Japanese towards their children extends, it would seem, even to artists. Every guide will take you to see the Sleeping Cat. Don't go. It is bad. Coming down the hill, I learned that all Nikko was two feet under snow in the winter, and while I was trying to imagine how fierce red, white, and black–green would look under the light of a winter sun I met the Professor murmuring expletives of admiration.

"What have you done? What have you seen?" said he.

"Nothing. I've accumulated a lot of impressions of no use to any one but the owner."

"Which means you are going to slop over for the benefit of the people in India," said the Professor.

And the notion so disgusted me that I left Nikko that very afternoon, the guide clamouring that I had not seen half its glories. "There is a lake," he said; "there are mountains. You must go see!"

"I will return to Tokio and study the modern side of Japan. This place annoys me because I do not understand it."

"Yet I am *the* good guide of Yokohama," said the guide.

No. XX

Shows How I Grossly Libelled the Japanese Army, and Edited a Civil and Military Gazette Which is Not in the Least Trustworthy - "And the Duke Said, 'Let There be Cavalry,' and There Were Cavalry. and He Said, 'Let Them be Slow,' and They Were Slow, D----d Slow; and the Japanese Imperial Horse Called He Them."

I was wrong. I know it. I ought to have clamoured at the doors of the Legation for a pass to see the Imperial Palace. I ought to have investigated Tokio and called upon some of the political leaders of the Liberal and Radical parties. There are a hundred things which I ought to have done, but somehow or other the bugles began to blare through the chill of the morning, and I heard the tramp of armed men under my window. The parade–ground was within a stone's throw of the Tokio hotel; the Imperial troops were going on parade. Would *you* have bothered your head about politics or temples? I ran after them.

It is rather difficult to get accurate information about the Japanese army. It seems to be in perpetual throes of reorganisation. At present, so far as one can gather, it is about one hundred and seventy thousand strong. Everybody has to serve for three years, but payment of one hundred dollars will shorten the term of service by one year at least. This is what a man who had gone through the mill told me. He capped his information with this verdict: "English army no use. Only navy any good. Have seen two hundred English army. No use."

On the parade–ground they had a company of foot and a wing of what, for the sake of brevity, I will call cavalry under instruction. The former were being put through some simple evolutions in close order; the latter were variously and singularly employed. To the former I took off the hat of respect; at the latter I am ashamed to say I pointed the finger of derision. But let me try to describe what I saw. The likeness of the Jap infantryman to the Gurkha grows when you see him in bulk. Thanks to their wholesale system of conscription the quality of conscripts varies immensely. I have seen scores of persons with spectacles whom it were base flattery to call soldiers, and who I hope were in the medical or commissariat departments. Again I have seen dozens of bull–necked, deep–chested, flat–backed, thin–flanked little men who were as good as a colonel commanding could desire. There was a man of the 2d Infantry whom I met at an up–country railway station. He carried just the proper amount of insolent swagger that a soldier should, refused to answer any questions of mine, and parted the crowd round him without ceremony. A Gurkha of the Prince of Wales' Own could not have been trimmer. In the crush of a ticket–collecting—we both got out together—I managed to run my

hand over that small man's forearm and chest. They must have a very complete system of gymnastics in the Japanese army, and I would have given much to have stripped my friend and seen how he peeled. If the 2d Infantry are equal to sample, they are good.

The men on parade at Tokio belonged either to the 4th or the 9th, and turned out with their cowskin valises strapped, but I think not packed. Under full kit, such as I saw on the sentry at Osaka Castle, they ought to be much too heavily burdened. Their officers were as miserable a set of men as Japan could furnish—spectacled, undersized even for Japan, hollow–backed and hump–shouldered. They squeaked their words of command and had to trot by the side of their men to keep up with them. The Jap soldier has the long stride of the Gurkha, and he doubles with the easy lope of the 'rickshaw coolie. Throughout the three hours that I watched them they never changed formation but once, when they doubled in pairs across the plain, their rifles at the carry. Their step and intervals were as good as those of our native regiments, but they wheeled rather promiscuously, and were not checked for this by their officers. So far as my limited experience goes, their formation was not Ours, but continental. The words of command were as beautifully unintelligible as anything our parade–grounds produce; and between them the officers of each half–company vehemently harangued their men, and shook their swords at 'em in distinctly unmilitary style. The precision of their movements was beyond praise. They enjoyed three hours of steady drill, and in the rare intervals when they stood easy to draw breath I looked for slackness all down the ranks, inasmuch as "standing easy" is the crucial test of men after the first smartness of the morning has worn off. They stood "easy," neither more nor less, but never a hand went to a shoe or stock or button while they were so standing. When they knelt, still in this queer column of company, I understood the mystery of the long–sword bayonet which has puzzled me sorely. I had expected to see the little fellows lifted into the air as the bayonet–sheath took ground; but they were not. They kicked it sideways as they dropped. All the same, the authorities tie men to the bayonets instead of bayonets to the men. When at the double there was no grabbing at the cartridge pouch with one hand or steadying the bayonet with the other, as may be seen any day at running–firing on Indian ranges. They ran cleanly—as our Gurkhas run.

It was an unchristian thought, but I would have given a good deal to see that company being blooded on an equal number of Our native infantry—just to know how they would work. If they have pluck, and there is not much in their past record to show that they have not, they ought to be first–class enemies. Under British officers instead of the little anatomies at present provided, and with a better rifle, they

should be as good as any troops recruited east of Suez. I speak here only for the handy little men I saw. The worst of conscription is that it sweeps in such a mass of fourth and fifth–rate citizens who, though they may carry a gun, are likely, by their own excusable ineptitude, to do harm to the morale and set–up of a regiment. In their walks abroad the soldiery never dream of keeping step. They tie things to their side–arms, they carry bundles, they slouch, and dirty their uniforms.

And so much for a raw opinion on Japanese infantry. The cavalry were having a picnic on the other side of the parade–ground—circling right and left by sections, trying to do something with a troop, and so forth. I would fain believe that the gentlemen I saw were recruits. But they wore all their arms, and their officers were just as clever as themselves. Half of them were in white fatigue–dress and flat cap,—and wore half–boots of brown leather with short hunting–spurs and black straps; no chains. They carried carbine and sword—the sword fixed to the man, and the carbine slung over the back. No martingales, but breastplates and crupper, a huge, heavy saddle, with single hide–girth, over two *numdahs*, completed the equipment which a thirteen–hand pony, all mane and tail, was trying to get rid of. When you thrust a two–pound bit and bridoon into a small pony's mouth, you hurt his feelings. When the riders wear, as did my friends, white worsted gloves, they cannot take a proper hold of the reins. When they ride with both hands, sitting well on the mount's neck, knuckles level with its ears and the stirrup leathers as short as they can be, the chances of the pony getting rid of the rider are manifestly increased. Never have I seen such a wild dream of equitation as the Tokio parade–ground showed. Do you remember the picture in *Alice in Wonderland*, just before Alice found the Lion and the Unicorn; when she met the armed men coming through the woods? I thought of that, and I thought of the White Knight in the same classic, and I laughed aloud. Here were a set of very fair ponies, sure–footed as goats, mostly entires, and full of go. Under Japanese weights they would have made very thorough mounted infantry. And here was this blindly imitative nation trying to turn them into heavy cavalry. As long as the little beasts were gravely trotting in circles they did not mind their work. But when it came to slashing at the Turk's head they objected very much indeed. I affiliated myself to a section who, armed with long wooden swords, were enjoying some Turk's–heading. Out started a pony at the gentlest of canters, while the rider bundled all the reins into one hand, and held his sword like a lance. Then the pony shied a little shy, shook his shaggy head, and began to passage round the Turk's head. There was no pressure of knee or rein to tell him what was wanted. The man on top began kicking with the spurs from shoulder to rump, and shaking up the ironmongery in the poor brute's

mouth. The pony could neither rear, nor kick, nor buck; but it shook itself free of the incubus who slid off. Three times I saw this happen. The catastrophe didn't rise to the dignity of a fall. It was the blundering collapse of incompetence plus worsted gloves, two–handed riding, and a haystack of equipment. Very often the pony went at the post, and the man delivered a back–handed cut at the Turk's head which nearly brought him out of his world–too–wide saddle. Again and again this solemn performance was repeated. I can honestly say that the ponies are very willing to break rank and leave their companions, which is what an English troop–horse fails in; but I fancy this is more due to the urgent private affairs of the pony than any skill in training. The troops charged once or twice in a terrifying canter. When the men wished to stop they leaned back and tugged, and the pony put his head to the ground, and bored all he knew. They charged me, but I was merciful, and forebore to empty half the saddles, as I assuredly could have done by throwing up my arms and yelling "Hi!" The saddest thing of all was the painful conscientiousness displayed by all the performers in the circus. They had to turn these rats into cavalry. They knew nothing about riding, and what they did know was wrong; but the rats must be made troop–horses. Why wouldn't the scheme work? There was a patient, pathetic wonder on the faces of the men that made me long to take one of them in my arms and try to explain things to him—bridles, for instance, and the futility of hanging on by the spurs. Just when the parade was over, and the troops were ambling off, Providence sent diagonally across the parade–ground, at a gallop, a big, rawboned man on a lathy–red American horse. The brute cracked his nostrils, and switched his flag abroad, and romped across the plain, while his rider dropped one hand and sat still, swaying lightly from the hips. The two served to scale the surroundings. Some one really ought to tell the Mikado that ponies were never intended for dragoons.

If the changes and chances of military service ever send you against Japanese troops, be tender with their cavalry. They mean no harm. Put some fusees down for the horses to step on, and send a fatigue–party out to pick up the remnants. But if you meet Japanese infantry, led by a Continental officer, commence firing early and often and at the longest ranges compatible with getting at them. They are bad little men who know too much.

Having thoroughly settled the military side of the nation exactly as my Japanese friend at the beginning of this letter settled Us,—on the strength of two hundred men caught at random,—I devoted myself to a consideration of Tokio. I am wearied of temples. Their monotony of splendour makes my head ache. You also will weary of temples unless you are an artist, and then you will be disgusted with yourself.

Some folk say that Tokio covers an area equal to London. Some folk say that it is not more than ten miles long and eight miles broad. There are a good many ways of solving the question. I found a tea–garden situated on a green plateau far up a flight of steps, with pretty girls smiling on every step. From this elevation I looked forth over the city, and it stretched away from the sea, far as the eye could reach—one grey expanse of packed house–roof, the perspective marked by numberless factory chimneys. Then I went several miles away and found a park, another eminence, and some more tea–girls prettier than the last; and, looking again, the city stretched out in a new direction as far as the eye could reach. Taking the scope of the eye on a clear day at eighteen miles, I make Tokio thirty–six miles long by thirty–six miles broad exactly; and there may be some more which I missed. The place roared with life through all its quarters. Double lines of trams ran down the main streets for mile on mile, rows of omnibuses stood at the principal railway station, and the "Compagnie General des Omnibus de Tokio" paraded the streets with gold and vermilion cars. All the trams were full, all the private and public omnibuses were full, and the streets were full of 'rickshaws. From the sea–shore to the shady green park, from the park to the dim distance, the land pullulated with people.

Here you saw how Western civilisation had eaten into them. Every tenth man was attired in Europe clothes from hat to boots. It is a queer race. It can parody every type of humanity to be met in a large English town. Eat and prosperous merchant with mutton–chop whiskers; mild–eyed, long–haired professor of science, his clothes baggy about him; schoolboy in Eton jacket, broadcloth trousers; young clerk, member of the Clapham Athletic Club in tennis flannels; artisans in sorely worn tweeds; top–hatted lawyer with clean–shaven upper lip and black leather bag; sailor out of work; and counter–jumper; all these and many, many more you shall find in the streets of Tokio in half an hour's walk. But when you come to speak to the imitation, behold it can only talk Japanese. You touch it, and it is not what you thought. I fluctuated down the streets addressing myself to the most English–looking folk I saw. They were polite with a graciousness that in no way accorded with their raiment, but they knew not a word of my tongue. One small boy in the uniform of the Naval College said suddenly: "I spik Inglees," and collapsed. The rest of the people in our clothes poured their own vernacular upon my head. Yet the shop–signs were English, the tramway under my feet was English gauge, the commodities sold were English, and the notices on the streets were in English. It was like walking in a dream. I reflected. Far away from Tokio and off the line of rail I had met men like these men in the streets. Perfectly dressed Englishmen to the outer eye, but dumb. The

country must be full of their likes.

"Good gracious! Here is Japan going to run its own civilisation without learning a language in which you can say Damn satisfactorily. I must inquire into this."

Chance had brought me opposite the office of a newspaper, and I ran in demanding an editor. He came—the Editor of the *Tokio Public Opinion*, a young man in a black frock–coat. There are not many editors in other parts of the world who would offer you tea and a cigarette ere beginning a conversation. My friend had but little English. His paper, though the name was printed in English, was Japanese. But he knew his business. Almost before I had explained my errand, which was the pursuit of miscellaneous information, he began: "You are English. How you think now the American Revision Treaty?" Out came a note–book and I sweated cold. It was not in the bargain that he should interview me.

"There's a great deal," I answered, remembering Sir Roger, of blessed memory,—"a great deal to be said on both sides. The American Revision Treaty—h'm—demands an enormous amount of matured consideration and may safely be referred—"

"But we of Japan are now civilised."

Japan says that she is now civilised. That is the crux of the whole matter so far as I understand it. "Let us have done with the idiotic system of treaty–ports and passports for the foreigner who steps beyond them," says Japan in effect. "Give us our place among the civilised nations of the earth, come among us, trade with us, hold land in our midst. Only be subject to our jurisdiction and submit to our—tariffs." Now since one or two of the foreign nations have won special tariffs for their goods in the usual way, they are not over–anxious to become just ordinary folk. The effect of accepting Japan's views would be excellent for the individual who wanted to go up–country and make his money, but bad for the nation. For Our nation in particular.

All the same I was not prepared to have my ignorance of a burning question put down in any note–book save my own. I Gladstoned about the matter with the longest words I could. My friend recorded them much after the manner of Count Smorltork. Then I attacked him on the subject of civilisation—speaking very slowly because he had a knack of running two words of mine together, and turning them into something new.

"You are right," said he. "We are becoming civilised. But not too quick, for that is bad. Now there are two parties in the State—the Liberal and the Radical: one Count he lead one, one Count lead the other. The Radical say that we should swiftly become all English. The Liberal he says not so quick, because that nation which too swiftly adopt other people's customs he decay. That question of civilisation

and the American Revision Treaty he occupied our chief attentions. Now we are not so zealous to become civilised as we were two—three years gone. Not so quick—that is our watchword. Yes."

If matured deliberation be the wholesale adoption of imperfectly understood arrangements, I should dearly like to see Japan in a hurry. We discussed comparative civilisations for a short time, and I protested feebly against the defilement of the streets of Tokio by rows of houses built after glaring European models. Surely there is no need to discard your own architecture, I said.

"Ha," snorted the chief of the *Public Opinion*. "You call it picturesque. I call it too. Wait till he light up—incendiate. A Japanese house then is one only fire box. *That* is why we think good to build in European fashion. I tell you, and you must believe, that we take up no change without thinking upon it. Truth, indeed, it is not because we are curious children, wanting new things, as some people have said. We have done with that season of picking up things and throwing them down again. You see?"

"Where did you pick up your Constitution, then?"

I did not know what the question would bring forth, yet I ought to have been wise. The first question that a Japanese on the railway asks an Englishman is: "Have you got the English translation of our Constitution?" All the book–stalls sell it in English and Japanese, and all the papers discuss it. The child is not yet three months old.

"Our Constitution?—That was promised to us—promised twenty years ago. Fourteen years ago the provinces they have been allowed to elect their big men—their heads. Three years ago they have been allowed to have assemblies, and thus Civil Liberty was assured."

I was baffled here for some time. In the end I thought I made out that the municipalities had been given certain control over police funds and the appointment of district officials. I may have been entirely wrong, but the editor bore me along on a torrent of words, his body rocking and his arms waving with the double agony of twisting a foreign tongue to his service and explaining the to–be–taken–seriouslyness of Japan. Whack come the little hand on the little table, and the little tea–cups jumped again.

"Truly, and indeed, this Constitution of ours has *not* come too soon. It proceeded step–by. You understand that? Now your Constitution, the Constitutions of the foreign nations, are all bloody—bloody Constitutions. Ours has come step–by. We did not fight as the barons fought with King John at Runnymede."

This was a quotation from a speech delivered at Otsu, a few days previously, by a member of the Government. I grinned at the brotherhood of editors all the world over. Up went the hand anew.

"We shall be happy with this Constitution and a people civilised

among civilisations."

"Of course. But what will you actually do with it? A Constitution is rather a monotonous thing to work after the fun of sending members to Parliament has died out. You have a Parliament, have you not?"

"Oh yes, *with* parties—Liberal and Radical."

"Then they will both tell lies to you and to each other. Then they will pass bills, and spend their time fighting each other. Then all the foreign governments will discover that you have no fixed policy."

"Ah, yes. But the Constitution." The little hands were crossed in his lap. The cigarette hung limply from his mouth.

"No fixed policy. Then, when you have sufficiently disgusted the foreign Powers, they will wait until the Liberals and Radicals are fighting very hard, and then they will blow you out of the water."

"You are not making fun? I do not quite understand," said he. "Your Constitutions are all so bloody."

"Yes. That is exactly what they are. You are very much in earnest about yours, are you not?"

"Oh yes, we all talk politics now."

"And write politics, of course. By the way, under what—h'm, arrangements with the Government is a Japanese paper published? I mean, must you pay anything before starting a press?"

"Literary, scientific, and religious papers—no. Quite free. All purely political papers pay five hundred yen—give to the Government to keep, or else some man says he will pay."

"You must give security, you mean?"

"I do not know, but sometimes the Government can keep the money. We are purely political."

Then he asked questions about India, and appeared astonished to find that the natives there possessed considerable political power, and controlled districts.

"But have you a Constitution in India?"

"I am afraid that we have not."

"Ah!"

He crushed me there, and I left very humbly, but cheered by the promise that the *Tokio Public Opinion* would contain an account of my words. Mercifully, that respectable journal is printed in Japanese, so the hash will not be served up to a large table. I would give a good deal to discover what meaning he attached to my forecast of Constitutional government in Japan.

"We all talk politics now." That was the sentence which remained to me. It was true talk. Men of the Educational Department in Tokio told me that the students would "talk politics" by the hour if you allowed them. At present they were talking in the abstract about their

new plaything, the Constitution, with its Upper House and its Lower House, its committees, its questions of supply, its rules of procedure, and all the other skittles we have played with for six hundred years.

Japan is the second Oriental country which has made it impossible for a strong man to govern alone. This she has done of her own free will. India, on the other hand, has been forcibly ravished by the Secretary of State and the English M. P.

Japan is luckier than India.

No. XXI

Shows the Similarity Between the Babu and the Japanese. Contains the Earnest Outcry of an Unbeliever. the Explanation of Mr. Smith of California and Elsewhere. Takes Me on Board Ship After Due Warning to Those Who Follow - Very Sadly Did We Leave It, but We Gave Our Hearts in Pledge to the Pine Above the City, to the Blossoms by the Hedge, to the Cherry and the Maple and the Plum Tree and the Peach, and the Babies--oh, the Babies!--romping Fatly Under Each. Eastward Ho! Across the Water See the Black Bow Drives and Swings From the Land of Little Children, Where the Babies Are the Kings

The Professor discovered me in meditation amid tea–girls at the back of the Ueno Park in the heart of Tokio. My 'rickshaw coolie sat by my side drinking tea from daintiest china, and eating maccaroons. I thought of Sterne's donkey and smiled vacuously into the blue above the trees. The tea–girls giggled. One of them captured my spectacles, perched them on her own snubby–chubby nose, and ran about among her cackling fellows.

"And loose thy fingers in the tresses of The cypress–slender minister of wine," quoted the Professor, coming round a booth suddenly. "Why aren't you at the Mikado's garden party?"

"Because he didn't invite me, and, anyhow, he wears Europe clothes—so does the Empress—so do all the Court people. Let's sit down and consider things. This people puzzles me."

And I told my story of the interview with the Editor of the *Tokio Public Opinion*. The Professor had been making investigation into the Educational Department. "And further," said he at the end of the tale, "the ambition of the educated student is to get a place under Government. Therefore he comes to Tokio: will accept any situation at Tokio that he may be near to his chance."

"Whose son is that student?"

"Son of the peasant, yeoman farmer, and shopkeeper, *ryot*, *tehsildar*, and *bunnia*. While he waits he imbibes Republican leanings on account of the nearness of Japan to America. He talks and writes and debates, and is convinced he can manage the Empire better than the Mikado."

"Does he go away and start newspapers to prove that?"

"He may; but it seems to be unwholesome work. A paper can be suspended without reason given under the present laws; and I'm told that one enterprising editor has just got three years' simple imprisonment for caricaturing the Mikado."

"Then there is yet hope for Japan. I can't quite understand how a

people with a taste for fighting and quick artistic perceptions can care for the things that delight our friends in Bengal."

"You make the mistake of looking on the Bengali as unique. So he is in his own peculiar style; but I take it that the drunkenness of Western wine affects all Oriental folk in much the same way. What misleads you is that very likeness. Followest thou? Because a Jap struggles with problems beyond his grip in much the same phraseology as a Calcutta University student, and discusses Administration with a capital A, you lump Jap and Chatterjee together."

"No, I don't. Chatterjee doesn't sink his money in railway companies, or sit down and provide for the proper sanitation of his own city, or of his own notion cultivate the graces of life, as the Jap does. He is like the *Tokio Public Opinion*—'purely political.' He has no art whatever, he has no weapons, and there is no power of manual labour in him. Yet he is like the Jap in the pathos of his politics. Have you ever studied Pathetic Politics? *Why* is he like the Jap?"

"Both drunk, I suppose," said the Professor. "Get that girl to give back your gig–lamps, and you will be able to see more clearly into the soul of the Far East."

"The 'Far East' hasn't got a soul. She swapped it for a Constitution on the Eleventh of February last. Can any Constitution make up for the wearing of Europe clothes? I saw a Jap lady just now in full afternoon calling–kit. She looked atrocious. Have you seen the later Japanese art—the pictures on the fans and in the shop windows? They are faithful reproductions of the changed life—telegraph poles down the streets, conventionalised tram–lines, top–hats, and carpet–bags in the hands of the men. The artists can make those things almost passable, but when it comes to conventionalising a Europe dress, the effect is horrible."

"Japan wishes to take her place among civilised nations," said the Professor.

"That's where the pathos comes in. It's enough to make you weep to watch this misdirected effort—this wallowing in unloveliness for the sake of recognition at the hands of men who paint their ceilings white, their grates black, their mantelpieces French grey, and their carriages yellow and red. The Mikado wears blue and gold and red, his guards wear orange breeches with a stone–blue stripe down them; the American missionary teaches the Japanese girl to wear bangs —"shingled bangs"—on her forehead, plait her hair into a pigtail, and to tie it up with magenta and cobalt ribbons. The German sells them the offensive chromos of his own country and the labels of his beer–bottles. Allen and Ginter devastate Tokio with their blood–red and grass–green tobacco–tins. And in the face of all these things the

country wishes to progress toward civilisation! I have read the entire Constitution of Japan, and it is dearly bought at the price of one of the kaleidoscope omnibuses plying in the street there."

"Are you going to inflict all that nonsense on them at home?" said the Professor.

"I am. For this reason. In the years to come, when Japan has sold her birthright for the privilege of being cheated on equal terms by her neighbours; when she has so heavily run into debt for her railways and public works that the financial assistance of England and annexation is her only help; when the Daimios through poverty have sold the treasures of their houses to the curio–dealer, and the dealer has sold them to the English collector; when all the people wear slop–trousers and ready–made petticoats, and the Americans have established soap factories on the rivers and a boarding–house on the top of Fujiyama, some one will turn up the files of the *Pioneer* and say: 'This thing was prophesied.' Then they will be sorry that they began tampering with the great sausage–machine of civilisation. What is put into the receiver must come out at the spout; but it must come out mincemeat. *Dixi!* And now let us go to the tomb of the Forty–Seven Ronins."

"It has been said some time ago, and much better than you can say it," said the Professor, *apropos* of nothing that I could see.

Distances are calculated by the hour in Tokio. Forty minutes in a 'rickshaw, running at full speed, will take you a little way into the city; two hours from the Ueno Park brings you to the tomb of the famous Forty–Seven, passing on the way the very splendid temples of Shiba, which are all fully described in the guide–books. Lacquer, gold–inlaid bronze–work, and crystals carved with the words "Om" and "Shri" are fine things to behold, but they do not admit of very varied treatment in print. In one tomb of one of the temples was a room of lacquer panels overlaid with gold leaf. An animal of the name of V. Gay had seen fit to scratch his entirely uninteresting name on the gold. Posterity will take note that V. Gay never cut his fingernails, and ought not to have been trusted with anything prettier than a hog–trough.

"It is the handwriting upon the wall," I said.

"Presently there will be neither gold nor lacquer—nothing but the finger–marks of foreigners. Let us pray for the soul of V. Gay all the same. Perhaps he was a missionary."

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The Japanese papers occasionally contain, sandwiched between

notes of railway, mining, and tram concessions, announcements like the following: "Dr. — committed *hara–kiri* last night at his private residence in such and such a street. Family complications are assigned as the reason of the act." Nor does *hara–kiri* merely mean suicide by any method. *Hara–kiri* is *hara–kiri*, and the private performance is even more ghastly than the official one. It is curious to think that any one of the dapper little men with top–hats and reticules who have a Constitution of their own, may in time of mental stress, strip to the waist, shake their hair over their brows, and, after prayer, rip themselves open. When you come to Japan, look at Farsari's *hara–kiri* pictures and his photos of the last crucifixion (twenty years ago) in Japan. Then at Deakin's, inquire for the modelled head of a gentleman who was not long ago executed in Tokio. There is a grim fidelity in the latter work of art that will make you uncomfortable. The Japanese, in common with the rest of the East, have a strain of blood–thirstiness in their compositions. It is very carefully veiled now, but some of Hokusai's pictures show it, and show that not long ago the people revelled in its outward expression. Yet they are tender to all children beyond the tenderness of the West, courteous to each other beyond the courtesy of the English, and polite to the foreigner alike in the big towns and in the Mofussil. What they will be after their Constitution has been working for three generations the Providence that made them what they are alone knows!

All the world seems ready to proffer them advice. Colonel Olcott is wandering up and down the country now, telling them that the Buddhist religion needs reformation, offering to reform it, and eating with ostentation rice gruel which is served to him in cups by admiring handmaidens. A wanderer from Kioto tells me that in the Chion–in, loveliest of all the temples, he saw only three days ago the Colonel mixed up with a procession of Buddhist priests, just such a procession as the one I tried vainly to describe, and "tramping about as if the whole show belonged to him." You cannot appreciate the solemnity of this until you have seen the Colonel and the Chion–in temple. The two are built on entirely different lines, and they don't seem to harmonise. It only needs now Madame Blavatsky, cigarette in mouth, under the *cryptomerias* of Nikko, and the return of Mr. Caine, M. P., to preach the sin of drinking *saki*, and the menagerie would be full.

Something should be done to America. There are many American missionaries in Japan, and some of them construct clapboard churches and chapels for whose ugliness no creed could compensate. They further instil into the Japanese mind wicked ideas of "Progress," and teach that it is well to go ahead of your neighbour, to improve your situation, and generally to thresh yourself to pieces in the battle of existence. They do not mean to do this; but their own restless energy

enforces the lesson. The American is objectionable. And yet—this is written from Yokohama—how pleasant in every way is a nice American whose tongue is cleansed of "right there," "all the time," "noos," "revoo," "raound," and the Falling Cadence. I have met such an one even now—a Californian ripened in Spain, matured in England, polished in Paris, and yet always a Californian. His voice and manners were soft alike, temperate were his judgments and temperately expressed, wide was his range of experience, genuine his humour, and fresh from the mint of his mind his reflections. It was only at the end of the conversation that he startled me a little.

"I understand that you are going to stay some time in California. Do you mind my giving you a little advice? I am speaking now of towns that are still rather brusque in their manners. When a man offers you a drink accept at once, and then stand drinks all round. I don't say that the second part of the programme is as necessary as the first, but it puts you on a perfectly safe footing. Above all, remember that where you are going you must never carry anything. The men you move among will do that for you. They have been accustomed to it. It is in some places, unluckily, a matter of life and death as well as daily practice to draw first. I have known really lamentable accidents occur from a man carrying a revolver when he did not know what to do with it. Do you understand anything about revolvers?"

"N–no," I stammered, "of course not."

"Do you think of carrying one?"

"Of course not. I don't want to kill myself."

"Then you are safe. But remember you will be moving among men who go heeled, and you will hear a good deal of talk about the thing and a great many tall stories. You may listen to the yarns, but you must not conform to the custom however much you may feel tempted. You invite your own death if you lay your hand on a weapon you don't understand. No man flourishes a revolver in a bad place. It is produced for one specified purpose and produced before you can wink."

"But surely if you draw first you have an advantage over the other man," said I, valorously.

"You think so? Let me show you. I have no use for any weapon, but I believe I have one about me somewhere. An ounce of demonstration is worth a ton of theory. Your pipe–case is on the table. My hands are on the table too. Use that pipe case as a revolver and as quickly as you can."

I used it in the approved style of the penny dreadful—pointed it with a stiff arm at my friend's head. Before I knew how it came about the pipe case had quitted my hand, which was caught close to the funny–bone and tingled horribly. I heard four persuasive clicks under

the table almost before I knew that my arm was useless. The gentleman from California had jerked out his pistol from its pocket and drawn the trigger four times, his hand resting on his hip while I was lifting my right arm.

"Now, do you believe?" he said. "Only an Englishman or an Eastern man fires from the shoulder in that melodramatic manner. I had you safe before your arm went out, merely because I happened to know the trick; and there are men out yonder who in a trouble could hold me as safe as I held you. They don't reach round for their revolver, as novelists say. It's here in front, close to the second right brace–button, and it is fired, without aim, at the other man's stomach. You will understand now why in event of a dispute you should show very clearly that you are unarmed. You needn't hold up your hands ostentatiously; keep them out of your pockets, or somewhere where your friend can see them. No man will touch you then. Or if he does, he is pretty sure to be shot by the general sense of the room."

"That must be a singular consolation to the corpse," I said.

"I see I've misled you. Don't fancy that any part in America is as free and easy as my lecture shows. Only in a few really tough towns do you require *not* to own a revolver. Elsewhere you are all right. Most Americans of my acquaintance have got into the habit of carrying something; but it's only a habit. They'd never dream of using it unless they are hard pressed. It's the man who draws to enforce a proposition about canning peaches, orange–culture, or town lots or water–rights that's a nuisance."

"Thank you," I said faintly. "I purpose to investigate these things later on. I'm much obliged to you for your advice."

When he had departed it struck me that, in the language of the East, "he might have been pulling my leg." But there remained no doubt whatever as to his skill with the weapon he excused so tenderly.

I put the case before the Professor. "We will go to America before you forejudge it altogether," said he. "To America in an American ship will we go, and say good–by to Japan." That night we counted the gain of our sojourn in the Land of Little Children more closely than many men count their silver. Nagasaki with the grey temples, green hills, and all the wonder of a first–seen shore; the Inland Sea, a thirty–hour panorama of passing islets drawn in grey and buff and silver for our delight; Kobé, where we fed well and went to a theatre; Osaka of the canals and the peach blossom; Kioto—happy, lazy, sumptuous Kioto, and the blue rapids and innocent delights of Arashima; Otzu on the shoreless, rainy lake; Myanoshita in the hills; Kamakura by the tumbling Pacific, where the great god Buddha sits and equably hears the centuries and the seas murmur in his ears; Nikko, fairest of all places under the sun; Tokio, the two–thirds civilised and altogether

progressive warren of humanity; and composite Franco–American Yokohama; we renewed them all, sorting out and putting aside our special treasures of memory. If we stayed longer, we might be disillusioned, and yet—surely, that would be impossible.

"What sort of mental impression do you carry away?" said the Professor.

"A tea–girl in fawn–coloured crêpe under a cherry tree all blossom. Behind her, green pines, two babies, and a hog–backed bridge spanning a bottle–green river running over blue boulders. In the foreground a little policeman in badly fitting Europe clothes drinking tea from blue and white china on a black lacquered stand. Fleecy white clouds above and a cold wind up the street," I said, summarising hastily.

"Mine is a little different. A Japanese boy in a flat–headed German cap and baggy Eton jacket; a King taken out of a toy–shop, a railway taken out of a toy–shop, hundreds of little Noah's Ark trees and fields made of green–painted wood. The whole neatly packed in a camphor–wood box with an explanatory book called the Constitution —price twenty cents."

"You looked on the darker side of things. But what's the good of writing impressions? Every man has to get his own at first hand. Suppose I give an itinerary of what we saw?"

"You couldn't do it," said the Professor, blandly. "Besides, by the time the next Anglo–Indian comes this way there will be a hundred more miles of railway and all the local arrangements will have changed. Write that a man should come to Japan without any plans. The guide–books will tell him a little, and the men he meets will tell him ten times more. Let him get first a good guide at Kobé, and the rest will come easily enough. An itinerary is only a fresh manifestation of that unbridled egoism which—"

"I shall write that a man can do himself well from Calcutta to Yokohama, stopping at Rangoon, Moulmein, Penang, Singapur, Hong–Kong, Canton, and taking a month in Japan, for about sixty pounds—rather less than more. But if he begins to buy curios, that man is lost. Five hundred rupees cover his month in Japan and allow him every luxury. Above all, he should bring with him thousands of cheroots—enough to serve him till he reaches 'Frisco. Singapur is the last place on the line where you can buy Burmas. Beyond that point wicked men sell Manila cigars with fancy names for ten, and Havanas for thirty–five, cents. No one inspects your boxes till you reach 'Frisco. Bring, therefore, at least one thousand cheroots."

"Do you know, it seems to me you have a very queer sense of proportion?"

And that was the last word the Professor spoke on Japanese soil.

No. XXII

Shows How I Came to America Before My Time and Was Much Shaken in Body and Soul - "Then Spoke Der Captain Stossenheim Who Had Theories of God, 'Oh, Breitmann, This is Judgment on Der Ways Dot You Have Trod. You Only Lifs to Enjoy Yourself While You Yourself Agree Dot Self-development Requires Der Religious Idee."'--C. G. Leland.

This is America. They call her the *City of Peking*, and she belongs to the Pacific Mail Company, but for all practical purposes she is the United States. We are divided between missionaries and generals—generals who were at Vicksburg and Shiloh, and German by birth, but more American than the Americans, who in confidence tell you that they are not generals at all, but only brevet majors of militia corps. The missionaries are perhaps the queerest portion of the cargo. Did you ever hear an English minister lecture for half an hour on the freight–traffic receipts and general working of, let us say, the Midland? The Professor has been sitting at the feet of a keen–eyed, close–bearded, swarthy man who expounded unto him kindred mysteries with a fluency and precision that a city leader–writer might have envied. "Who's your financial friend with the figures at his fingers' ends?" I asked. "Missionary—Presbyterian Mission to the Japs," said the Professor. I laid my hand upon my mouth and was dumb.

As a counterpoise to the missionaries, we carry men from Manila—lean Scotchmen who gamble once a month in the Manila State lottery and occasionally turn up trumps. One, at least, drew a ten–thousand–dollar prize last December and is away to make merry in the New World. Everybody on the staff of an American steamer this side the Continent seems to gamble steadily in that lottery, and the talk of the smoking–room runs almost entirely on prizes won by accident or lost through a moment's delay. The tickets are sold more or less openly at Yokahama and Hong–Kong, and the drawings—losers and winners both agree here—are above reproach.

We have resigned ourselves to the infinite monotony of a twenty days' voyage. The Pacific Mail advertises falsely. Only under the most favorable circumstances of wind and steam can their under–engined boats cover the distance in fifteen days. Our *City of Peking*, for instance, had been jogging along at a gentle ten knots an hour, a pace out of all proportion to her bulk. "When we get a wind," says the Captain, "we shall do better." She is a four–master and can carry any amount of canvas. It is not safe to run steamers across this void under the poles of Atlantic liners. The monotony of the sea is paralysing. We have passed the wreck of a little sealing–schooner lying bottom up

and covered with gulls. She weltered by in the chill dawn, unlovely as the corpse of a man, and the wild birds piped thinly at us as they steered her across the surges. The pulse of the Pacific is no little thing even in the quieter moods of the sea. It set our bows swinging and nosing and ducking ere we were a day clear of Yokohama, and yet there was never swell nor crested wave in sight. "We ride very high," said the Captain, "and she's a dry boat. She has a knack of crawling over things somehow; but we shan't need to put her to the test this journey."

* * * * *

The Captain was mistaken. For four days we have endured the sullen displeasure of the North Pacific, winding up with a night of discomfort. It began with a grey sea, flying clouds, and a head–wind that smote fifty knots off the day's run. Then rose from the southeast a beam sea warranted by no wind that was abroad upon the waters in our neighbourhood, and we wallowed in the trough of it for sixteen mortal hours. In the stillness of the harbour, when the newspaper man is lunching in her saloon and the steam–launch is crawling round her sides, a ship of pride is a "stately liner." Out in the open, one rugged shoulder of a sea between you and the horizon, she becomes "the old hooker," a "lively boat," and other things of small import, for this is necessary to propitiate the Ocean. "There's a storm to the southeast of us," explained the Captain. "That's what's kicking up this sea."

The *City of Peking* did not belie her reputation. She crawled over the seas in liveliest wise, never shipping a bucket till—she was forced to. Then she took it green over the bows to the vast edification of, at least, one passenger who had never seen the scuppers full before.

Later in the day the fun began. "Oh, she's a daisy at rolling," murmured the chief steward, flung starfish–wise on a table among his glassware. "She's rolling some," said a black apparition new risen from the stoke–hold. "Is she going to roll any more?" demanded the ladies grouped in what ought to have been the ladies' saloon, but, according to American custom, was labelled "Social Hall."

Passed in the twilight the chief officer—a dripping, bearded face. "Shall I mark out the bull–board?" said he, and lurched aft, followed by the tongue of a wave. "She'll roll her guards under to–night," said a man from Louisiana, where their river–steamers do not understand the meaning of bulwarks. We dined to a dashing accompaniment of crockery, the bounds of emancipated beer–bottles livelier than their own corks, and the clamour of the ship's gong broken loose and calling to meals on its own account.

After dinner the real rolling began. She did roll "guards under," as the Louisiana man had prophesied. At thirty–minute intervals to the second arrived one big sea, when the electric lamps died down to nothing, and the screw raved and the blows of the sea made the decks quiver. On those occasions we moved from our chairs, not gently, but discourteously. At other times we were merely holding on with both hands.

It was then that I studied Fear—Terror bound in black silk and fighting hard with herself. For reasons which will be thoroughly understood, there was a tendency among the passengers to herd together and to address inquiries to every officer who happened to stagger through the saloon. No one was in the least alarmed,—oh dear, no!—but all were keenly anxious for information. This anxiety redoubled after a more than usually vicious roll. Terror was a large, handsome, and cultured lady who knew the precise value of human life, the inwardness of *Robert Elsmere*, the latest poetry—everything in fact that a clever woman should know. When the rolling was near its worst, she began to talk swiftly. I do not for a moment believe that she knew what she was talking about. The rolling increased. She buckled down to the task of making conversation. By the heave of the labouring bust, the restless working of the fingers on the tablecloth, and the uncontrollable eyes that turned always to the companion stairhead, I was able to judge the extremity of her fear. Yet her words were frivolous and commonplace enough; they poured forth unceasingly, punctuated with little laughs and giggles, as a woman's speech should be. Presently, a member of her group suggested going to bed. No, she wanted to sit up; she wanted to go on talking, and as long as she could get a soul to sit with her she had her desire. When for sheer lack of company she was forced to get to her cabin, she left reluctantly, looking back to the well–lighted saloon over her shoulder. The contrast between the flowing triviality of her speech and the strained intentness of eye and hand was a quaint thing to behold. I know now how Fear should be painted.

No one slept very heavily that night. Both arms were needed to grip the berth, while the trunks below wound the carpet–slips into knots and battered the framing of the cabins. Once it seemed to me that the whole of the labouring fabric that cased our trumpery fortunes stood on end and in this undignified posture hopped a mighty hop. Twice I know I shot out of my berth to join the adventurous trunks on the floor. A hundred times the crash of the wave on the ship's side was followed by the roar of the water, as it swept the decks and raved round the deckhouses. In a lull I heard the flying feet of a man, a shout, and a far–away chorus of lost spirits singing somebody's requiem.

May 24 (Queen's Birthday).—If ever you meet an American, be good to him. This day the ship was dressed with flags from stem to stern, and chiefest of the bunting was the Union–Jack. They had given no word of warning to the English, who were proportionately pleased. At dinner up rose an ex–Commissioner of the Lucknow Division (on my honour, Anglo–India extends to the ends of the earth!) and gave us the health of Her Majesty and the President. It was afterwards that the trouble began. A small American penned half a dozen English into a corner and lectured them soundly on—their want of patriotism!

"What sort of Queen's Birthday do you call this?" he thundered. "What did you drink our President's health for? What's the President to you on this day of all others? Well, suppose you *are* in the minority, all the more reason for standing by your country. Don't talk to me. You Britishers made a mess of it—a mighty bungle of the whole thing. I'm an American of the Americans; but if no one can propose Her Majesty's health better than by just throwing it at your heads, I'm going to try."

Then and there he delivered a remarkably neat little oration—pat, well put together, and clearly delivered. So it came to pass that the Queen's health was best honoured by an American. We English were dazed. I wondered how many Englishmen not trained to addressing their fellows would have spoken half so fluently as the gentleman from 'Frisco.

"Well, you see," said one of us feebly, "she's our Queen, anyhow, and—and—she's been ours for fifty years, and not one of us here has seen England for seven years, and we can't enthuse over the matter. We've lived to be hauled over the coals for want of patriotism by an American! We'll be more careful next time."

And the conversation drifted naturally into the question of the government of men—English, Japanese (we have several travelled Japanese aboard), and Americans throwing the ball from one to another. We bore in mind the golden rule: "Never agree with a man who abuses his own country," and got on well enough.

"Japan," said a little gentleman who was a rich man there, "Japan is divided into two administrative sides. On the one the remains of a very strict and quite Oriental despotism; on the other a mass of—what do you call it?—red–tapeism which is not understood even by the officials who handle it. We copy the red tape, and when it is copied we believe that we administer. That is a vice of all Oriental nations. We are Orientals."

"Oh no, say the most westerly of the westerns," purred an American, soothingly.

The little man was pleased. "Thanks. That is what we hope to believe, but up to the present it is not so. Look now. A farmer in my

country holds a hillside cut into little terraces. Every year he must submit to his Government a statement of the size and revenue paid, not on the whole hillside, but on each terrace. The complete statement makes a pile three inches high, and is of no use when it is made except to keep in work thousands of officials to check the returns. Is that administration? By God! we call it so, but we multiply officials by the twenty, and *they* are not administration. What country is such a fool? Look at our Government offices eaten up with clerks! Some day, I tell you, there will be a smash."

This was new to me, but I might have guessed it. In every country where swords and uniforms accompany civil office there is a natural tendency towards an ill–considered increase of officialdom.

"You might pay India a visit some day," I said. "I fancy that you would find that our country shares your trouble."

Thereupon a Japanese gentleman in the Educational Department began to cross–question me on the matters of his craft in India, and in a quarter of an hour got from me the very little that I knew about primary schools, higher education, and the value of an M. A. degree. He knew exactly what he wanted to ask, and only dropped me when the tooth of Desire had clean picked the bone of Ignorance.

Then an American held forth, harping on a string that has already been too often twanged in my ear. "What will it be in America itself?"

"The whole system is rotten from top to bottom," he said. "As rotten as rotten can be."

"That's so," said the Louisiana man, with an affirmative puff of smoke.

"They call us a Republic. We may be. I don't think it. You Britishers have got the only republic worth the name. You choose to run your ship of state with a gilt figurehead; but I know, and so does every man who has thought about it, that your Queen doesn't cost you one–half what our system of pure democracy costs us. Politics in America? There aren't any. The whole question of the day is spoils. That's all. We fight our souls out over tram–contracts, gas–contracts, road–contracts, and any darned thing that will turn a dishonest dollar, and we call that politics. No one but a low–down man will run for Congress and the Senate—the Senate of the freest people on earth are bound slaves to some blessed monopoly. If I had money enough, I could buy the Senate of the United States, the Eagle, and the Star–Spangled Banner complete."

"And the Irish vote included?" said some one—a Britisher, I fancy.

"Certainly, if I chose to go yahooing down the street at the tail of the British lion. Anything dirty will buy the Irish vote. That's why our politics are dirty. Some day you Britishers will grant Home Rule to the vermin in our blankets. Then the real Americans will invite the Irish

to get up and git to where they came from. 'Wish you'd hurry up that time before we have another trouble. We're bound hand and foot by the Irish vote; or at least that's the excuse for any unusual theft that we perpetrate. I tell you there's no good in an Irishman except as a fighter. He doesn't understand work. He has a natural gift of the gab, and he can drink a man blind. These three qualifications make him a first–class politician."

With one accord the Americans present commenced to abuse Ireland and its people as they had met them, and each man prefaced his commination service with: "I am an American by birth—an American from way back."

It must be an awful thing to live in a country where you have to explain that you really belong there. Louder grew the clamour and crisper the sentiments.

"If we weren't among Americans, I should say we were consorting with Russians," said a fellow–countryman in my ear.

"They can't mean what they say," I whispered. "Listen to this fellow." He was saying:

"And I know, for I have been three times round the world and resided in most countries on the Continent, that there was never people yet could govern themselves."

"Allah! This from an American!"

"And who should know better than an American?" was the retort. "For the ignorant—that is to say for the majority—there is only one argument—fear; the fear of Death. In our case we give any scallawag who comes across the water all the same privileges that we have made for ourselves. There we make a mistake. They thank us by playing the fool. Then we shoot them down. You can't persuade the mob of any country to become decent citizens. If they misbehave themselves, shoot them. I saw the bombs thrown at Chicago when our police were blown to bits. I saw the banners in the procession that threw the bombs. All the mottoes on them were in German. The men were aliens in our midst, and they were shot down like dogs. I've been in labour riots and seen the militia go through a crowd like a finger through tissue paper."

"I was in the riots at New Orleans," said the man from Louisiana. "We turned the Gatling on the other crowd, and they were sick."

"Whew! I wonder what would have happened if a Gatling had been used when the West End riots were in full swing?" said an Englishman. "If a single rioter were killed in an English town by the police, the chances are that the policeman would have to stand his trial for murder and the Ministry of the day would go out."

"Then you've got all your troubles before you. The more power you give the people, the more trouble they will give. With us our

better classes are corrupt and our lower classes are lawless. There are millions of useful, law–abiding citizens, and they are very sick of this thing. We execute our justice in the streets. The law courts are no use. Take the case of the Chicago Anarchists. It was all we could do to get 'em hanged: whereas the dead in the streets had been punished off–hand. We were sure of *them*. Guess that's the reason we are so quick to fire on a mob. But it's unfair, all the same. We receive all these cattle —Anarchists, Socialists, and ruffians of every sort—and then we shoot them. The States are as republican as they make 'em. We have no use for a man who wants to try any more experiments on the Constitution. We are the biggest people on God's earth. All the world knows that. We've been shouting that we are also the greatest people. No one cares to contradict us but ourselves; and we are now wondering whether we are what we claim to be. Never mind; you Britishers will have the same experiences to go through. You're beginning to rot now. Your County Councils will make you more rotten because you are putting power into the hands of untrained people. When you reach our level, —every man with a vote and the right to sell it; the right to nominate fellows of his own kidney to swamp out better men,—you'll be what we are now—rotten, rotten, rotten!"

The voice ceased, and no man rose up to contradict.

"We'll worry through it somehow," said the man from Louisiana. "What would do us a world of good now would be a big European war. We're getting slack and sprawly. Now a war outside our borders would make us all pull together. But that's a luxury we shan't get."

"Can't you raise one within your own borders?" I said flippantly, to get rid of the thought of the great blind nation in her unrest putting out her hand to the Sword. Mine was a most unfortunate remark.

"I hope not," said an American, very seriously. "We have paid a good deal to keep ourselves together before this, and it is not likely that we shall split up without protest. Yet some say we are too large, and some say that Washington and the Eastern States are running the whole country. If ever we do divide,—God help us when we do,—it will be East and West this time."

"We built the old hooker too long in the run. We put the engine room aft. Break her back," said an American who had not yet spoken. "'Wonder if our forbears knew how she was going to grow."

"A very large country." The speaker sighed as though the weight of it from New York to 'Frisco lay upon his shoulders. "If ever we do divide, it means that we are done for. There is no room for four first–class empires in the States. One split will lead to another if the first is successful. What's the use of talking?"

What was the use? Here's our conversation as it ran, the night of the Queen's Birthday. What do *you* think?

No. XXIII

How I Got to San Francisco and Took Tea With the Natives There - "Serene, Indifferent to Fate, Thou Sittest at the Western Gate, Thou Seest the White Seas Fold Their Tents, Oh Warder of Two Continents. Thou Drawest All Things Small and Great to Thee Beside the Western Gate."

This is what Bret Harte has written of the great city of San Francisco, and for the past fortnight I have been wondering what made him do it. There is neither serenity nor indifference to be found in these parts; and evil would it be for the Continent whose wardship were intrusted to so reckless a guardian. Behold me pitched neck–and–crop from twenty days of the High Seas, into the whirl of California, deprived of any guidance, and left to draw my own conclusions. Protect me from the wrath of an outraged community if these letters be ever read by American eyes. San Francisco is a mad city—inhabited for the most part by perfectly insane people whose women are of a remarkable beauty. When the *City of Peking* steamed through the Golden Gate I saw with great joy that the block–house which guarded the mouth of the "finest harbour in the world, Sir," could be silenced by two gunboats from Hong–Kong with safety, comfort, and despatch.

Then a reporter leaped aboard, and ere I could gasp held me in his toils. He pumped me exhaustively while I was getting ashore, demanding, of all things in the world, news about Indian journalism. It is an awful thing to enter a new land with a new lie on your lips. I spoke the truth to the evil–minded Custom–house man who turned my most sacred raiment on a floor composed of stable–refuse and pine–splinters; but the reporter overwhelmed me not so much by his poignant audacity as his beautiful ignorance. I am sorry now that I did not tell him more lies as I passed into a city of three hundred thousand white men. Think of it! Three hundred thousand white men and women gathered in one spot, walking upon real pavements in front of real plate–glass windowed shops, and talking something that was not very different from English. It was only when I had tangled myself up in a hopeless maze of small wooden houses, dust, street–refuse, and children who play with empty kerosene tins, that I discovered the difference of speech.

"You want to go to the Palace Hotel?" said an affable youth on a dray. "What in hell are you doing here, then? This is about the lowest place in the city. Go six blocks north to corner of Geary and Market; then walk around till you strike corner of Gutter and Sixteenth, and that brings you there."

I do not vouch for the literal accuracy of these directions, quoting but from a disordered memory.

"Amen," I said. "But who am I that I should strike the corners of such as you name? Peradventure they be gentlemen of repute, and might hit back. Bring it down to dots, my son."

I thought he would have smitten me, but he didn't. He explained that no one ever used the word "street," and that every one was supposed to know how the streets run; for sometimes the names were upon the lamps and sometimes they weren't. Fortified with these directions I proceeded till I found a mighty street full of sumptuous buildings four or five stories high, but paved with rude cobble stones in the fashion of the Year One. A cable–car without any visible means of support slid stealthily behind me and nearly struck me in the back. A hundred yards further there was a slight commotion in the street—a gathering together of three or four—and something that glittered as it moved very swiftly. A ponderous Irish gentleman with priest's cords in his hat and a small nickel–plated badge on his fat bosom emerged from the knot, supporting a Chinaman who had been stabbed in the eye and was bleeding like a pig. The bystanders went their ways, and the Chinaman, assisted by the policeman, his own. Of course this was none of my business, but I rather wanted to know what had happened to the gentleman who had dealt the stab. It said a great deal for the excellence of the municipal arrangements of the town that a surging crowd did not at once block the street to see what was going forward. I was the sixth man and the last who assisted at the performance, and my curiosity was six times the greatest. Indeed, I felt ashamed of showing it.

There were no more incidents till I reached the Palace Hotel, a seven–storied warren of humanity with a thousand rooms in it. All the travel–books will tell you about hotel arrangements in this country. They should be seen to be appreciated. Understand clearly—and this letter is written after a thousand miles of experiences—that money will not buy you service in the West.

When the hotel clerk—the man who awards your room to you and who is supposed to give you information—when that resplendent individual stoops to attend to your wants, he does so whistling or humming, or picking his teeth, or pauses to converse with some one he knows. These performances, I gather, are to impress upon you that he is a free man and your equal. From his general appearance and the size of his diamonds he ought to be your superior. There is no necessity for this swaggering, self–consciousness of freedom. Business is business, and the man who is paid to attend to a man might reasonably devote his whole attention to the job.

In a vast marble–paved hall under the glare of an electric light sat

forty or fifty men; and for their use and amusement were provided spittoons of infinite capacity and generous gape. Most of the men wore frock–coats and top–hats,—the things that we in India put on at a wedding breakfast if we possessed them,—but they all spat. They spat on principle. The spittoons were on the staircases, in each bedroom—yea, and in chambers even more sacred than these. They chased one into retirement, but they blossomed in chiefest splendour round the Bar, and they were all used, every reeking one of 'em. Just before I began to feel deathly sick, another reporter grappled me. What he wanted to know was the precise area of India in square miles. I referred him to Whittaker. He had never heard of Whittaker. He wanted it from my own mouth, and I would not tell him. Then he swerved off, like the other man, to details of journalism in our own country. I ventured to suggest that the interior economy of a paper most concerned the people who worked it. "That's the very thing that interests us," he said. "Have you got reporters anything like our reporters on Indian news papers?" "We have not," I said, and suppressed the "thank God" rising to my lips. "*Why* haven't you?" said he. "Because they would die," I said. It was exactly like talking to a child—a very rude little child. He would begin almost every sentence with: "Now tell me something about India," and would turn aimlessly from one question to another without the least continuity. I was not angry, but keenly interested. The man was a revelation to me. To his questions I returned answers mendacious and evasive. After all, it really did not matter what I said. He could not understand. I can only hope and pray that none of the readers of the *Pioneer* will ever see that portentous interview. The man made me out to be an idiot several sizes more drivelling than my destiny intended, and the rankness of his ignorance managed to distort the few poor facts with which I supplied him into large and elaborate lies. Then thought I: "The matter of American journalism shall be looked into later on. At present I will enjoy myself."

No man rose to tell me what were the lions of the place. No one volunteered any sort of conveyance. I was absolutely alone in this big city of white folk. By instinct I sought refreshment and came upon a bar–room, full of bad Salon pictures, in which men with hats on the backs of their heads were wolfing food from a counter. It was the institution of the "Free Lunch" that I had struck. You paid for a drink and got as much as you wanted to eat. For something less than a rupee a day a man can feed himself sumptuously in San Francisco, even though he be bankrupt. Remember this if ever you are stranded in these parts.

Later, I began a vast but unsystematic exploration of the streets. I asked for no names. It was enough that the pavements were full of

white men and women, the streets clanging with traffic, and that the restful roar of a great city rang in my ears. The cable–cars glided to all points of the compass. I took them one by one till I could go no farther. San Francisco has been pitched down on the sand–bunkers of the Bikaneer desert. About one–fourth of it is ground reclaimed from the sea—any old–timer will tell you all about that. The remainder is ragged, unthrifty sand–hills, pegged down by houses.

From an English point of view there has not been the least attempt at grading those hills, and indeed you might as well try to grade the hillocks of Sind. The cable–cars have for all practical purposes made San Francisco a dead level. They take no count of rise or fall, but slide equably on their appointed courses from one end to the other of a six–mile street. They turn corners almost at right angles; cross other lines, and, for aught I know, may run up the sides of houses. There is no visible agency of their flight; but once in a while you shall pass a five–storied building, humming with machinery that winds up an everlasting wire–cable, and the initiated will tell you that here is the mechanism. I gave up asking questions. If it pleases Providence to make a car run up and down a slit in the ground for many miles, and if for twopence–halfpenny I can ride in that car, why shall I seek the reasons of the miracle? Rather let me look out of the windows till the shops give place to thousands and thousands of little houses made of wood—each house just big enough for a man and his family. Let me watch the people in the cars, and try to find out in what manner they differ from us, their ancestors. They delude themselves into the belief that they talk English,—*the* English,—and I have already been pitied for speaking with "an English accent." The man who pitied me spoke, so far as I was concerned, the language of thieves. And they all do. Where we put the accent forward, they throw it back, and *vice versa*; where we use the long *a*, they use the short; and words so simple as to be past mistaking, they pronounce somewhere up in the dome of their heads. How do these things happen? Oliver Wendell Holmes says that Yankee schoolmarms, the cider, and the salt codfish of the Eastern States are responsible for what he calls a nasal accent. A Hindu is a Hindu, and a brother to the man who knows his vernacular; and a Frenchman is French because he speaks his own language; but the American has no language. He is dialect, slang, provincialism, accent, and so forth. Now that I have heard their voices, all the beauty of Bret Harte is being ruined for me, because I find myself catching through the roll of his rhythmical prose the cadence of his peculiar fatherland. Get an American lady to read to you "How Santa Claus came to Simpson's Bar," and see how much is, under her tongue, left of the beauty of the original.

But I am sorry for Bret Harte. It happened this way. A reporter

asked me what I thought of the city, and I made answer suavely that it was hallowed ground to me because of Bret Harte. That was true: "Well," said the reporter, "Bret Harte claims California, but California don't claim Bret Harte. He's been so long in England that he's quite English. Have you seen our cracker–factories and the new offices of the *Examiner*?" He could not understand that to the outside world the city was worth a great deal less than the man.

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Night fell over the Pacific, and the white sea–fog whipped through the streets, dimming the splendours of the electric lights. It is the use of this city, her men and women, to parade between the hours of eight and ten a certain street, called Kearney Street, where the finest shops are situated. Here the click of heels on the pavement is loudest, here the lights are brightest, and here the thunder of the traffic is most overwhelming. I watched Young California and saw that it was at least expensively dressed, cheerful in manner, and self–asserting in conversation. Also the women are very fair. The maidens were of generous build, large, well–groomed, and attired in raiment that even to my inexperienced eyes must have cost much. Kearney Street, at nine o'clock, levels all distinctions of rank as impartially as the grave. Again and again I loitered at the heels of a couple of resplendent beings, only to overhear, when I expected the level voice of culture, the *staccato* "Sez he," "Sez I," that is the mark of the white servant–girl all the world over.

This was depressing because, in spite of all that goes to the contrary, fine feathers ought to make fine birds. There was wealth—unlimited wealth—in the streets, but not an accent that would not have been dear at fifty cents. Wherefore, revolving in my mind that these folk were barbarians, I was presently enlightened and made aware that they also were the heirs of all the ages, and civilised after all. There appeared before me an affable stranger of prepossessing appearance, with a blue and an innocent eye. Addressing me by name, he claimed to have met me in New York at the Windsor, and to this claim I gave a qualified assent. I did not remember the fact, but since he was so certain of it, why then—I waited developments. "And what did you think of Indiana when you came through?" was the next question. It revealed the mystery of previous acquaintance, and one or two other things. With reprehensible carelessness, my friend of the light–blue eye had looked up the name of his victim in the hotel register and read "India" for Indiana. He could not imagine an Englishman coming through the States from West to East instead of by

the regularly ordained route. My fear was that in his delight at finding me so responsive he would make remarks about New York and the Windsor which I could not understand. And indeed, he adventured in this direction once or twice, asking me what I thought of such and such streets, which, from his tone, I gathered were anything but respectable. It is trying to talk unknown New York in almost unknown San Francisco. But my friend was merciful. He protested that I was one after his own heart, and pressed upon me rare and curious drinks at more than one bar. These drinks I accepted with gratitude, as also the cigars with which his pockets were stored. He would show me the Life of the city. Having no desire to watch a weary old play again, I evaded the offer, and received in lieu of the Devil's instruction much coarse flattery. Curiously constituted is the soul of man. Knowing how and where this man lied, waiting idly for the finale, I was distinctly conscious, as he bubbled compliments in my ear, of soft thrills of gratified pride. I was wise, quoth he, anybody could see that with half an eye; sagacious; versed in the affairs of the world; an acquaintance to be desired; one who had tasted the cup of Life with discretion. All this pleased me, and in a measure numbed the suspicion that was thoroughly aroused. Eventually the blue–eyed one discovered, nay insisted, that I had a taste for cards (this was clumsily worked in, but it was my fault, in that I met him half–way, and allowed him no chance of good acting). Hereupon, I laid my head to one side, and simulated unholy wisdom, quoting odds and ends of poker–talk, all ludicrously misapplied. My friend kept his countenance admirably; and well he might, for five minutes later we arrived, always by the purest of chances, at a place where we could play cards, and also frivol with Louisiana State Lottery tickets. Would I play? "Nay," said I, "for to me cards have neither meaning nor continuity; but let us assume that I am going to play. How would you and your friends get to work? Would you play a straight game, or make me drunk, or—well, the fact is I'm a newspaper man, and I'd be much obliged if you'd let me know something about bunco–steering." My blue–eyed friend cursed me by his gods,—the Right and the Left Bower; he even cursed the very good cigars he had given me. But, the storm over, he quieted down and explained. I apologised for causing him to waste an evening, and we spent a very pleasant time together. Inaccuracy, provincialism, and a too hasty rushing to conclusions were the rocks that he had split on; but he got his revenge when he said: "How would I play with you? From all the poppycock" (*Anglice*, bosh) "you talked about poker, I'd ha' played a straight game and skinned you. I wouldn't have taken the trouble to make you drunk. You never knew anything of the game; but the way I was mistaken in you makes me sick." He glared at me as though I had done him an injury. To–day I

know how it is that, year after week after week, the bunco–steerer, who is the confidence–trick and the card–sharper man of other climes, secures his prey. He slavers them over with flattery, as the snake slavers the rabbit. The incident depressed me because it showed I had left the innocent East far behind, and was come to a country where a man must look out for himself. The very hotel bristled with notices about keeping my door locked, and depositing my valuables in a safe. The white man in a lump is bad. Weeping softly for O–Toyo (little I knew then that my heart was to be torn afresh from my bosom!), I fell asleep in the clanging hotel.

Next morning I had entered upon the Deferred Inheritance. There are no princes in America,—at least with crowns on their heads,—but a generous–minded member of some royal family received my letter of introduction. Ere the day closed I was a member of the two clubs and booked for many engagements to dinner and party. Now this prince, upon whose financial operations be continual increase, had no reason, nor had the others, his friends, to put himself out for the sake of one Briton more or less; but he rested not till he had accomplished all in my behalf that a mother could think of for her *débutante* daughter. Do you know the Bohemian Club of San Francisco? They say its fame extends over the world. It was created somewhat on the lines of the Savage by men who wrote or drew things, and it has blossomed into most unrepublican luxury. The ruler of the place is an owl—an owl standing upon a skull and cross–bones, showing forth grimly the wisdom of the man of letters and the end of his hopes for immortality. The owl stands on the staircase, a statue four feet high, is carved in the woodwork, flutters on the frescoed ceilings, is stamped on the note paper, and hangs on the walls. He is an Ancient and Honourable Bird. Under his wing 'twas my privilege to meet with white men whose lives were not chained down to routine of toil, who wrote magazine articles instead of reading them hurriedly in the pauses of office–work, who painted pictures instead of contenting themselves with cheap etchings picked up at another man's sale of effects. Mine were all the rights of social intercourse that India, stony–hearted step–mother of Collectors, has swindled us out of. Treading soft carpets and breathing the incense of superior cigars, I wandered from room to room studying the paintings in which the members of the club had caricatured themselves, their associates, and their aims. There was a slick French audacity about the workmanship of these men of toil unbending that went straight to the heart of the beholder. And yet it was not altogether French. A dry grimness of treatment, almost Dutch, marked the difference. The men painted as they spoke—with certainty. The club indulges in revelries which it calls "jinks"—high and low,—at intervals,—and each of these gatherings is faithfully portrayed in oils

by hands that know their business. In this club were no amateurs spoiling canvas because they fancied they could handle oils without knowledge of shadows or anatomy—no gentleman of leisure ruining the temper of publishers and an already ruined market with attempts to write "because everybody writes something these days." My hosts were working, or had worked, for their daily bread with pen or paint, and their talk for the most part was of the shop shoppy—that is to say, delightful. They extended a large hand of welcome and were as brethren, and I did homage to the Owl and listened to their talk. An Indian Club about Christmas–time will yield, if properly worked, an abundant harvest of queer tales; but at a gathering of Americans from the uttermost ends of their own continent the tales are larger, thicker, more spinous, and even more azure than any Indian variety. Tales of the War I heard told by an ex–officer of the South over his evening drink to a Colonel of the Northern army; my introducer, who had served as a trooper in the Northern Horse, throwing in emendations from time to time.

Other voices followed with equally wondrous tales of riata–throwing in Mexico or Arizona, of gambling at army posts in Texas, of newspaper wars waged in godless Chicago, of deaths sudden and violent in Montana and Dakota, of the loves of half–breed maidens in the South, and fantastic huntings for gold in mysterious Alaska. Above all, they told the story of the building of old San Francisco, when the "finest collection of humanity on God's earth, Sir, started this town, and the water came up to the foot of Market Street." Very terrible were some of the tales, grimly humorous the others, and the men in broadcloth and fine linen who told them had played their parts in them.

"And now and again when things got too bad they would toll the city bell, and the Vigilance Committee turned out and hanged the suspicious characters. A man didn't begin to be suspected in those days till he had committed at least one unprovoked murder," said a calm–eyed, portly old gentleman. I looked at the pictures around me, the noiseless, neat–uniformed waiter behind me, the oak–ribbed ceiling above, the velvety carpet beneath. It was hard to realise that even twenty years ago you could see a man hanged with great pomp. Later on I found reason to change my opinion. The tales gave me a headache and set me thinking. How in the world was it possible to take in even one–thousandth of this huge, roaring, many–sided continent? In the silence of the sumptuous library lay Professor Bryce's book on the American Republic. "It is an omen," said I. "He has done all things in all seriousness, and he may be purchased for half a guinea. Those who desire information of the most undoubted must refer to his pages. For me is the daily round of vagabondage, the

recording of the incidents of the hour, and talk with the travelling companion of the day. I will not 'do' this country at all."

And I forgot all about India for ten days while I went out to dinners and watched the social customs of the people, which are entirely different from our customs, and was introduced to the men of many millions. These persons are harmless in their earlier stages; that is to say, a man worth three or four million dollars may be a good talker, clever, amusing, and of the world; a man with twice that amount is to be avoided; and a twenty–million man is—just twenty millions. Take an instance. I was speaking to a newspaper man about seeing the proprietor of his journal. My friend snorted indignantly: "See *him*! Great Scott! *No!* If he happens to appear in the office, I have to associate with him; but, thank Heaven, outside of that I move in circles where he cannot come."

And yet the first thing I have been taught to believe is that money was everything in America!

No. XXIV

Shows How Through Folly I Assisted at a Murder and Was Afraid. the Rule of the Democracy and the Despotism of the Alien - "Poor Men--god Made, and All for That!"

It was a bad business throughout, and the only consolation is that it was all my fault. A man took me round the Chinese quarter of San Francisco, which is a ward of the city of Canton set down in the most eligible business–quarter of the place. The Chinaman with his usual skill has possessed himself of good brick fire–proof buildings and, following instinct, has packed each tenement with hundreds of souls, all living in filth and squalor not to be appreciated save by you in India. That cursory investigation ought to have sufficed; but I wanted to know how deep in the earth the Pig–tail had taken root. Therefore I explored the Chinese quarter a second time and alone, which was foolishness. No one in the filthy streets (but for the blessed sea breezes San Francisco would enjoy cholera every season) interfered with my movements, though many asked for *cumshaw*. I struck a house about four stories high full of celestial abominations, and began to burrow down; having heard that these tenements were constructed on the lines of icebergs—two–thirds below sight level. Downstairs I crawled past Chinamen in bunks, opium–smokers, brothels, and gambling hells, till I had reached the second cellar—was in fact, in the labyrinths of a warren. Great is the wisdom of the Chinaman. In time of trouble that house could be razed to the ground by the mob, and yet hide all its inhabitants in brick–walled and wooden–beamed subterranean galleries, strengthened with iron–framed doors and gates. On the second underground floor a man asked for *cumshaw* and took me downstairs to yet another cellar, where the air was as thick as butter, and the lamps burned little holes in it not more than an inch square. In this place a poker club had assembled and was in full swing. The Chinaman loves "pokel," and plays it with great skill, swearing like a cat when he loses. Most of the men round the table were in semi–European dress, their pigtails curled up under billy–cock hats. One of the company looked like a Eurasian, whence I argued that he was a Mexican—a supposition that later inquiries confirmed. They were a picturesque set of fiends and polite, being too absorbed in their game to look at the stranger. We were all deep down under the earth, and save for the rustle of a blue gown sleeve and the ghostly whisper of the cards as they were shuffled and played, there was no sound. The heat was almost unendurable. There was some dispute between the Mexican and the man on his left. The latter shifted his place to put the table between himself and his opponent, and stretched a lean

yellow hand towards the Mexican's winnings.

Mark how purely man is a creature of instinct. Rarely introduced to the pistol, I saw the Mexican half rise in his chair and at the same instant found myself full length on the floor. None had told me that this was the best attitude when bullets are abroad. I was there prone before I had time to think—dropping as the room was filled with an intolerable clamour like the discharge of a cannon. In those close quarters the pistol report had no room to spread any more than the smoke—then acrid in my nostrils. There was no second shot, but a great silence in which I rose slowly to my knees. The Chinaman was gripping the table with both hands and staring in front of him at an empty chair. The Mexican had gone, and a little whirl of smoke was floating near the roof. Still gripping the table, the Chinaman said: "Ah!" in the tone that a man would use when, looking up from his work suddenly, he sees a well–known friend in the doorway. Then he coughed and fell over to his own right, and I saw that he had been shot in the stomach.

I became aware that, save for two men leaning over the stricken one, the room was empty; and all the tides of intense fear, hitherto held back by intenser curiosity, swept over my soul. I ardently desired the outside air. It was possible that the Chinamen would mistake me for the Mexican,—everything horrible seemed possible just then,—and it was more than possible that the stairways would be closed while they were hunting for the murderer. The man on the floor coughed a sickening cough. I heard it as I fled, and one of his companions turned out the lamp. Those stairs seemed interminable, and to add to my dismay there was no sound of commotion in the house. No one hindered, no one even looked at me. There was no trace of the Mexican. I found the doorway and, my legs trembling under me, reached the protection of the clear cool night, the fog, and the rain. I dared not run, and for the life of me I could not walk. I must have effected a compromise, for I remember the light of a street lamp showed the shadow of one half skipping—caracoling along the pavements in what seemed to be an ecstacy of suppressed happiness. But it was fear—deadly fear. Fear compounded of past knowledge of the Oriental—only other white man—available witness—three stories underground—and the cough of the Chinaman now some forty feet under my clattering boot–heels. It was good to see the shop–fronts and electric lights again. Not for anything would I have informed the police, because I firmly believed that the Mexican had been dealt with somewhere down there on the third floor long ere I had reached the air; and, moreover, once clear of the place, I could not for the life of me tell where it was. My ill–considered flight brought me out somewhere a mile distant from the hotel; and the clank of the lift that

bore me to a bed six stories above ground was music in my ears. Wherefore I would impress it upon you who follow after, do not knock about the Chinese quarters at night and alone. You may stumble across a picturesque piece of human nature that will unsteady your nerves for half a day.

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And this brings me by natural sequence to the great drink question. As you know, of course, the American does not drink at meals as a sensible man should. Indeed, he has no meals. He stuffs for ten minutes thrice a day. Also he has no decent notions about the sun being over the yard–arm or below the horizon. He pours his vanity into himself at unholy hours, and indeed he can hardly help it. You have no notion of what "treating" means on the Western slope. It is more than an institution; it is a religion, though men tell me that it is nothing to what it was. Take a very common instance. At 10.30 A.M. a man is smitten with desire for stimulants. He is in the company of two friends. All three adjourn to the nearest bar,—seldom more than twenty yards away,—and take three straight whiskys. They talk for two minutes. The second and third man then treats in order; and thus each walks into the street, two of them the poorer by three goes of whisky under their belt and one with two more liquors than he wanted. It is not etiquette yet to refuse a treat. The result is peculiar. I have never yet, I confess, seen a drunken man in the streets, but I have heard more about drunkenness among white men, and seen more decent men above or below themselves with drink, than I care to think about. And the vice runs up into all sorts of circles and societies. Never was I more astonished than at one pleasant dinner party to hear a pair of pretty lips say casually of a gentleman friend then under discussion, "He was drunk." The fact was merely stated without emotion. That was what startled me. But the climate of California deals kindly with excess, and treacherously covers up its traces. A man neither bloats nor shrivels in this dry air. He continues with the false bloom of health upon his cheeks, an equable eye, a firm mouth, and a steady hand till a day of reckoning arrives, and suddenly breaking up, about the head, he dies, and his friends speak his epitaph accordingly. Why people who in most cases cannot hold their liquor should play with it so recklessly I leave to others to decide. This unhappy state of affairs has, however, produced one good result which I will confide to you. In the heart of the business quarter, where banks and bankers are thickest, and telegraph wires most numerous, stands a semi–subterranean bar tended by a German with long blond locks and a

crystalline eye. Go thither softly, treading on the tips of your toes, and ask him for a Button Punch. 'Twill take ten minutes to brew, but the result is the highest and noblest product of the age. No man but one knows what is in it. I have a theory it is compounded of the shavings of cherubs' wings, the glory of a tropical dawn, the red clouds of sunset, and fragments of lost epics by dead masters. But try you for yourselves, and pause a while to bless me, who am always mindful of the truest interests of my brethren.

But enough of the stale spilth of bar–rooms. Turn now to the august spectacle of a Government of the people, by the people, for the people, as it is understood in the city of San Francisco. Professor Bryce's book will tell you that every American citizen over twenty–one years of age possesses a vote. He may not know how to run his own business, control his wife, or instil reverence into his children, may be pauper, half–crazed with drink, bankrupt, dissolute, or merely a born fool; but he has a vote. If he likes, he can be voting most of his time—voting for his State Governor, his municipal officers, local option, sewage contracts, or anything else of which he has no special knowledge.

Once every four years he votes for a new President. In his spare moments he votes for his own judges—the men who shall give him justice. These are dependent on popular favour for re–election inasmuch as they are but chosen for a term of years—two or three, I believe. Such a position is manifestly best calculated to create an independent and unprejudiced administrator. Now this mass of persons who vote is divided into two parties—Republican and Democrat. They are both agreed in thinking that the other part is running creation (which is America) into red flame. Also the Democrat as a party drinks more than the Republican, and when drunk may be heard to talk about a thing called the Tariff, which he does not understand, but which he conceives to be the bulwark of the country or else the surest power for its destruction. Sometimes he says one thing and sometimes another, in order to contradict the Republican, who is always contradicting himself. And this is a true and lucid account of the forepart of American politics. The behind–part is otherwise.

Since every man has a vote and may vote on every conceivable thing, it follows that there exist certain wise men who understand the art of buying up votes retail, and vending them wholesale to whoever wants them most urgently. Now an American engaged in making a home for himself has not time to vote for turn–cocks and district attorneys and cattle of that kind, but the unemployed have much time because they are always on hand somewhere in the streets. They are called "the boys," and form a peculiar class. The boys are young men;

inexpert in war, unskilled in labour; who have neither killed a man, lifted cattle, or dug a well. In plain English, they are just the men in the streets who can always be trusted to rally round any cause that has a glass of liquor for a visible heart. They wait—they are on hand—; and in being on hand lies the crown and the glory of American politics. The wise man is he who, keeping a liquor–saloon and judiciously dispensing drinks, knows how to retain within arm's reach a block of men who will vote for or against anything under the canopy of Heaven. Not every saloon–keeper can do this. It demands careful study of city politics, tact, the power of conciliation, and infinite resources of anecdote to amuse and keep the crowd together night after night, till the saloon becomes a salon. Above all, the liquor side of the scheme must not be worked for immediate profit. The boys who drink so freely will ultimately pay their host a thousandfold. An Irishman, and an Irishman pre–eminently, knows how to work such a saloon parliament. Observe for a moment the plan of operations. The rank and file are treated to drink and a little money—and they vote. He who controls ten votes receives a proportionate reward; the dispenser of a thousand votes is worthy of reverence, and so the chain runs on till we reach the most successful worker of public saloons—the man most skilful in keeping his items together and using them when required. Such a man governs the city as absolutely as a king. And you would know where the gain comes in? The whole of the public offices of a city (with the exception of a very few where special technical skill is required) are short–term offices distributed according to "political" leanings. What would you have? A big city requires many officials. Each office carries a salary and influence worth twice the pay. The offices are for the representatives of the men who keep together and are on hand to vote. The Commissioner of Sewage, let us say, is a gentleman who has been elected to his office by a Republican vote. He knows little and cares less about sewage, but he has sense enough to man the pumping–works and the street–sweeping–machines with the gentlemen who elected him. The Commissioner of Police has been helped to his post very largely by the influence of the boys at such and such a saloon. He may be the guardian of city morals, but he is not going to allow his subordinates to enforce early closing or abstention from gambling in that saloon. Most offices are limited to four years, consequently he is a fool who does not make his office pay him while he is in it.

The only people who suffer by this happy arrangement are, in fact, the people who devised the lovely system. And they suffer because they are Americans. Let us explain. As you know, every big city here holds at least one big foreign vote—generally Irish, frequently German. In San Francisco, the gathering place of the races,

there is a distinct Italian vote to be considered, but the Irish vote is more important. For this reason the Irishman does not kill himself with overwork. He is made for the cheery dispensing of liquors, for everlasting blarney, and possesses a wonderfully keen appreciation of the weaknesses of lesser human nature. Also he has no sort of conscience, and only one strong conviction—that of deep–rooted hatred toward England. He keeps to the streets, he is on hand, he votes joyously, spending days lavishly,—and time is the American's dearest commodity. Behold the glorious result. To–day the city of San Francisco is governed by the Irish vote and the Irish influence, under the rule of a gentleman whose sight is impaired, and who requires a man to lead him about the streets. He is called officially "Boss Buckley," and unofficially the "Blind White Devil." I have before me now the record of his amiable career in black and white. It occupies four columns of small print, and perhaps you would think it disgraceful. Summarised, it is as follows: Boss Buckley, by tact and deep knowledge of the seamy side of the city, won himself a following of voters. He sought no office himself, or rarely: but as his following increased he sold their services to the highest bidder, himself taking toll of the revenues of every office. He controlled the Democratic party in the city of San Francisco. The people appoint their own judges. Boss Buckley's people appointed judges. These judges naturally were Boss Buckley's property. I have been to dinner parties and heard educated men, not concerned with politics, telling stories one to another of "justice," both civil and criminal, being bought with a price from the hands of these judges. Such tales they told without heat, as men recording facts. Contracts for road–mending, public buildings, and the like are under the control of Boss Buckley, because the men whom Buckley's following sent to the City Council adjudicate on these contracts; and on each and every one of these contracts Boss Buckley levies his percentage for himself and his allies.

The Republican party in San Francisco also have their boss. He is not so great a genius as Boss Buckley, but I decline to believe that he is any whit more virtuous. He has a smaller number of votes at his command.

No. XXV

Tells How I Dropped Into Politics and the Tenderer Sentiments. Contains a Moral Treatise on American Maidens and an Ethnological One on the Negro. Ends With a Banquet and a Type-writer

I have been watching machinery in repose after reading about machinery in action. An excellent gentleman who bears a name honoured in the magazines writes, much as Disraeli orated, of "the sublime instincts of an ancient people," the certainty with which they can be trusted to manage their own affairs in their own way, and the speed with which they are making for all sorts of desirable goals. This he called a statement or purview of American politics. I went almost directly afterwards to a saloon where gentlemen interested in ward politics nightly congregate. They were not pretty persons. Some of them were bloated, and they all swore cheerfully till the heavy gold watch–chains on their fat stomachs rose and fell again; but they talked over their liquor as men who had power and unquestioned access to places of trust and profit. The magazine–writer discussed theories of government; these men the practice. They had been there. They knew all about it. They banged their fists on the table and spoke of political "pulls," the vending of votes, and so forth. Theirs was not the talk of village babblers reconstructing the affairs of the nation, but of strong, coarse, lustful men fighting for spoil and thoroughly understanding the best methods of reaching it. I listened long and intently to speech I could not understand, or only in spots. It was the speech of business, however. I had sense enough to know *that*, and to do my laughing outside the door. Then I began to understand why my pleasant and well–educated hosts in San Francisco spoke with a bitter scorn of such duties of citizenship as voting and taking an interest in the distribution of offices. Scores of men have told me with no false pride that they would as soon concern themselves with the public affairs of the city or State as rake muck. Read about politics as the cultured writer of the magazines regards 'em, and then, *and not till then*, pay your respects to the gentlemen who run the grimy reality.

I'm sick of interviewing night–editors, who, in response to my demand for the record of a prominent citizen, answer: "Well, you see, he began by keeping a saloon," etc. I prefer to believe that my informants are treating me as in the old sinful days in India I was used to treat our wandering Globe–trotters. They declare that they speak the truth, and the news of dog–politics lately vouchsafed to me in groggeries incline me to believe—but I won't. The people are much too nice to slangander as recklessly as I have been doing. Besides, I am

hopelessly in love with about eight American maidens—all perfectly delightful till the next one comes into the room. O–Toyo was a darling, but she lacked several things; conversation, for one. You cannot live on giggles. She shall remain unmoved at Nagasaki while I roast a battered heart before the shrine of a big Kentucky blonde who had for a nurse, when she was little, a negro "mammy." By consequence she has welded on to Californian beauty, Paris dresses, Eastern culture, Europe trips, and wild Western originality, the queer dreamy superstitions of the negro quarters, and the result is soul–shattering. And she is but one of many stars. *Item*, a maiden who believes in education and possesses it, with a few hundred thousand dollars to boot, and a taste for slumming. *Item*, the leader of a sort of informal salon where girls congregate, read papers, and daringly discuss metaphysical problems and candy—a sloe–eyed, black–browed, imperious maiden. *Item*, a very small maiden, absolutely without reverence, who can in one swift sentence trample upon and leave gasping half a dozen young men. *Item*, a millionnairess, burdened with her money, lonely, caustic, with a tongue keen as a sword, yearning for a sphere, but chained up to the rock of her vast possessions. *Item*, a typewriter–maiden earning her own bread in this big city, because she doesn't think a girl ought to be a burden on her parents. She quotes Théophile Gautier, and moves through the world manfully, much respected, for all her twenty inexperienced summers. *Item*, a woman from Cloudland who has no history in the past, but is discreetly of the present, and strives for the confidences of male humanity on the grounds of "sympathy." (This is not altogether a new type.) *Item*, a girl in a "dive" blessed with a Greek head and eyes that seem to speak all that is best and sweetest in the world. But woe is me!—she has no ideas in this world or the next, beyond the consumption of beer (a commission on each bottle), and protests that she sings the songs allotted to her nightly with no more than the vaguest notion of their meaning.

Sweet and comely are the maidens of Devonshire; delicate and of gracious seeming those who live in the pleasant places of London; fascinating for all their demureness the damsels of France clinging closely to their mothers, and with large eyes wondering at the wicked world; excellent in her own place and to those who understand her is the Anglo–Indian "spin" in her second season; but the girls of America are above and beyond them all. They are clever; they can talk. Yea, it is said that they think. Certainly they have an appearance of so doing. They are original, and look you between the brows with unabashed eyes as a sister might look at her brother. They are instructed in the folly and vanity of the male mind, for they have associated with "the boys" from babyhood, and can discerningly minister to both vices, or

pleasantly snub the possessor. They possess, moreover, a life among themselves, independent of masculine associations. They have societies and clubs and unlimited tea–fights where all the guests are girls. They are self–possessed without parting with any tenderness that is their sex–right; they understand; they can take care of themselves; they are superbly independent. When you ask them what makes them so charming, they say: "It is because we are better educated than your girls and—and we are more sensible in regard to men. We have good times all round, but we aren't taught to regard every man as a possible husband. Nor is he expected to marry the first girl he calls on regularly." Yes, they have good times, their freedom is large, and they do not abuse it. They can go driving with young men, and receive visits from young men to an extent that would make an English mother wink with horror; and neither driver nor drivee have a thought beyond the enjoyment of a good time. As certain also of their own poets have said:—

> "Man is fire and woman is tow,
> And the Devil he comes and begins to blow."

In America the tow is soaked in a solution that makes it fire–proof, in absolute liberty and large knowledge; consequently accidents do not exceed the regular percentage arranged by the Devil for each class and climate under the skies. But the freedom of the young girl has its drawbacks. She is—I say it with all reluctance—irreverent, from her forty–dollar bonnet to the buckles in her eighteen–dollar shoes. She talks flippantly to her parents and men old enough to be her grandfather. She has a prescriptive right to the society of the Man who Arrives. The parents admit it. This is sometimes embarrassing, especially when you call on a man and his wife for the sake of information; the one being a merchant of varied knowledge, the other a woman of the world. In five minutes your host has vanished. In another five his wife has followed him, and you are left with a very charming maiden doubtless, but certainly not the person you came to see. She chatters and you grin; but you leave with the very strong impression of a wasted morning. This has been my experience once or twice. I have even said as pointedly as I dared to a man: "I came to see you." "You'd better see me in my office, then. The house belongs to my women–folk—to my daughter, that is to say." He spoke with truth. The American of wealth is owned by his family. They exploit him for bullion, and sometimes it seems to me that his lot is a lonely one. The women get the ha'pence; the kicks are all his own. Nothing is too good for an American's daughter (I speak here of the moneyed classes). The girls take every gift as a matter of course. Yet they develop greatly

when a catastrophe arrives and the man of many millions goes up or goes down and his daughters take to stenography or type–writing. I have heard many tales of heroism from the lips of girls who counted the principals among their friends. The crash came; Mamie or Hattie or Sadie gave up their maid, their carriages and candy, and with a No. 2 Remington and a stout heart set about earning their daily bread.

"And did I drop her from the list of my friends? No, Sir," said a scarlet–lipped vision in white lace. "That might happen to me any day."

It may be this sense of possible disaster in the air that makes San Franciscan society go with so captivating a rush and whirl. Recklessness is in the air. I can't explain where it comes from, but there it is. The roaring winds off the Pacific make you drunk to begin with. The aggressive luxury on all sides helps out the intoxication, and you spin for ever "down the ringing groves of change" (there is no small change, by the way, west of the Rockies) as long as money lasts. They make greatly and they spend lavishly; not only the rich but the artisans, who pay nearly five pounds for a suit of clothes and for other luxuries in proportion. The young men rejoice in the days of their youth. They gamble, yacht, race, enjoy prize–fights and cock–fights—the one openly, the other in secret—they establish luxurious clubs; they break themselves over horse–flesh and—other things; and they are instant in quarrel. At twenty they are experienced in business; embark in vast enterprises, take partners as experienced as themselves, and go to pieces with as much splendour as their neighbours. Remember that the men who stocked California in the Fifties were physically, and as far as regards certain tough virtues, the pick of the earth. The inept and the weakly died *en route* or went under in the days of construction. To this nucleus were added all the races of the Continent—French, Italian, German, and, of course, the Jew. The result you shall see in large–boned, deep–chested, delicate–handed women, and long, elastic, well–built boys. It needs no little golden badge swinging from his watch–chain to mark the Native Son of the Golden West—the country–bred of California. Him I love because he is devoid of fear, carries himself like a man, and has a heart as big as his boots. I fancy, too, he knows how to enjoy the blessings of life that his world so abundantly bestows upon him. At least I heard a little rat of a creature with hock–bottle shoulders explaining that a man from Chicago could pull the eye–teeth of a Californian in business. Well, if I lived in Fairyland, where cherries were as big as plums, plums as big as apples, and strawberries of no account; where the procession of the fruits of the seasons was like a pageant in a Drury Lane pantomime and where the dry air was wine, I should let business slide once in a way and kick up my heels with my

fellows. The tale of the resources of California—vegetable and mineral—is a fairy tale. You can read it in books. You would never believe me. All manner of nourishing food from sea–fish to beef may be bought at the lowest prices; and the people are well developed and of a high stomach. They demand ten shillings for tinkering a jammed lock of a trunk; they receive sixteen shillings a day for working as carpenters; they spend many sixpences on very bad cigars, and they go mad over a prize–fight. When they disagree, they do so fatally, with firearms in their hands, and on the public streets. I was just clear of Mission Street when the trouble began between two gentlemen, one of whom perforated the other. When a policeman, whose name I do not recollect, "fatally shot Ed. Kearney," for attempting to escape arrest, I was in the next street. For these things I am thankful. It is enough to travel with a policeman in a tram–car and while he arranges his coat–tails as he sits down, to catch sight of a loaded revolver. It is enough to know that fifty per cent of the men in the public saloons carry pistols about them. The Chinaman waylays his adversary and methodically chops him to pieces with his hatchet. Then the Press roar about the brutal ferocity of the Pagan. The Italian reconstructs his friend with a long knife. The Press complains of the waywardness of the alien. The Irishman and the native Californian in their hours of discontent use the revolver, not once, but six times. The Press records the fact, and asks in the next column whether the world can parallel the progress of San Francisco. The American who loves this country will tell you that this sort of thing is confined to the lower classes. Just at present an ex–judge who was sent to jail by another judge (upon my word, I cannot tell whether these titles mean anything) is breathing red–hot vengeance against his enemy. The papers have interviewed both parties and confidently expect a fatal issue.

Now let me draw breath and curse the negro waiter and through him the negro in service generally. He has been made a citizen with a vote; consequently both political parties play with him. But that is neither here nor there. He will commit in one meal every *bétise* that a scullion fresh from the plough–tail is capable of, and he will continue to repeat those faults. He is as complete a heavy–footed, uncomprehending, bungle–fisted fool as any *memsahib* in the East ever took into her establishment. But he is according to law a free and independent citizen—consequently above reproof or criticism. He, and he alone, in this insane city will wait at table (the Chinaman doesn't count). He is untrained, inept, but he will fill the place and draw the pay. Now God and his father's Kismet made him intellectually inferior to the Oriental. He insists on pretending that he serves tables by accident—as a sort of amusement. He wishes you to understand this little fact. You wish to eat your meals, and if possible to have them

properly served. He is a big, black, vain baby and a man rolled into one. A coloured gentleman who insisted on getting me pie when I wanted something else, demanded information about India. I gave him some facts about wages. "Oh hell," said he, cheerfully, "that wouldn't keep me in cigars for a month." Then he fawned on me for a ten–cent piece. Later he took it upon himself to pity the natives of India—"heathen" he called them, this Woolly One whose race has been the butt of every comedy on the Asiatic stage since the beginning. And I turned and saw by the head upon his shoulders that he was a Yoruba man, if there be any truth in ethnological castes. He did his thinking in English, but he was a Yoruba negro, and the race type had remained the same throughout his generations. And the room was full of other races—some that looked exactly like Gallas (but the trade was never recruited from that side of Africa), some duplicates of Cameroon heads, and some Kroomen, if ever Kroomen wore evening dress. The American does not consider little matters of descent, though by this time he ought to know all about "damnable heredity." As a general rule he keeps himself very far from the negro and says unpretty things about him. There are six million negroes more or less in the States, and they are increasing. The Americans once having made them citizens cannot unmake them. He says, in his newspapers, they ought to be elevated by education. He is trying this: but it is like to be a long job, because black blood is much more adhesive than white, and throws back with annoying persistence. When the negro gets a religion he returns, directly as a hiving bee, to the first instincts of his people. Just now a wave of religion is sweeping over some of the Southern States. Up to the present, two Messiahs and one Daniel have appeared; and several human sacrifices have been offered up to these incarnations. The Daniel managed to get three young men, who he insisted were Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, to walk into a blast furnace; guaranteeing non–combustion. They did not return. I have seen nothing of this kind, but I have attended a negro church. The congregation were moved by the spirit to groans and tears, and one of them danced up the aisle to the mourners' bench. The motive may have been genuine. The movements of the shaken body were those of a Zanzibar stick–dance, such as you see at Aden on the coal boats; and even as I watched the people, the links that bound them to the white man snapped one by one, and I saw before me—the *hubshi* (the Woolly One) praying to the God he did not understand. Those neatly dressed folk on the benches, the grey–headed elder by the window, were savages—neither more nor less. What will the American do with the negro? The South will not consort with him. In some States miscegenation is a penal offence. The North is every year less and less in need of his services. And he will not disappear. He will continue as

a problem. His friends will urge that he is as good as the white man. His enemies … it is not good to be a negro in the land of the free and the home of the brave.

But this has nothing to do with San Francisco and her merry maidens, her strong, swaggering men, and her wealth of gold and pride. They bore me to a banquet in honour of a brave Lieutenant—Carlin, of the *Vandalia*—who stuck by his ship in the great cyclone at Apia and comported himself as an officer should. On that occasion—'twas at the Bohemian Club—I heard oratory with the roundest of O's; and devoured a dinner the memory of which will descend with me into the hungry grave. There were about forty speeches delivered; and not one of them was average or ordinary. It was my first introduction to the American Eagle screaming for all it was worth. The Lieutenant's heroism served as a peg from which those silver–tongued ones turned themselves loose and kicked. They ransacked the clouds of sunset, the thunderbolts of Heaven, the deeps of Hell, and the splendours of the Resurrection, for tropes and metaphors, and hurled the result at the head of the guest of the evening. Never since the morning stars sang together for joy, I learned, had an amazed creation witnessed such superhuman bravery as that displayed by the American navy in the Samoa cyclone. Till earth rotted in the phosphorescent star–and–stripe slime of a decayed universe that God–like gallantry would not be forgotten. I grieve that I cannot give the exact words. My attempt at reproducing their spirit is pale and inadequate. I sat bewildered on a coruscating Niagara of—blatherumskite. It was magnificent—it was stupendous; and I was conscious of a wicked desire to hide my face in a napkin and grin. Then, according to rule, they produced their dead, and across the snowy tablecloths dragged the corpse of every man slain in the Civil War, and hurled defiance at "our natural enemy" (England, so please you!) "with her chain of fortresses across the world." Thereafter they glorified their nation afresh, from the beginning, in case any detail should have been overlooked, and that made me uncomfortable for their sakes. How in the world can a white man, a Sahib of Our blood, stand up and plaster praise on his own country? He can think as highly as he likes, but his open–mouthed vehemence of adoration struck me almost as indelicate. My hosts talked for rather more than three hours, and at the end seemed ready for three hours more. But when the Lieutenant—such a big, brave, gentle giant!—rose to his feet, he delivered what seemed to me as the speech of the evening. I remember nearly the whole of it, and it ran something in this way: "Gentlemen—it's very good of you to give me this dinner and to tell me all these pretty things, but what I want you to understand—the fact is—what we want and what we ought to get at once is a navy—

more ships—lots of 'em—" Then we howled the top of the roof off, and I, for one, fell in love with Carlin on the spot. Wallah! He was a man.

The Prince among merchants bade me take no heed to the warlike sentiments of some of the old Generals. "The sky–rockets are thrown in for effect," quoth he, "and whenever we get on our hind legs we always express a desire to chaw up England. It's a sort of family affair."

And indeed, when you come to think of it, there is no other country for the American public speaker to trample upon.

France has Germany; we have Russia; for Italy, Austria is provided; and the humblest Pathan possesses an ancestral enemy. Only America stands out of the racket; and therefore, to be in fashion, makes a sand–bag of the mother–country, and bangs her when occasion requires. "The chain of fortresses" man, a fascinating talker, explained to me after the affair that he was compelled to blow off steam. Everybody expected it. When we had chanted "The Star–Spangled Banner" not more than eight times, we adjourned. America is a very great country, but it is not yet Heaven with electric lights and plush fittings, as the speakers professed to believe. My listening mind went back to the politicians in the saloon who wasted no time in talking about freedom, but quietly made arrangements to impose their will on the citizens. "The Judge is a great man, but give thy presents to the Clerk," as the proverb saith.

And what more remains to tell? I cannot write connectedly, because I am in love with all those girls aforesaid and some others who do not appear in the invoice. The type–writer girl is an institution of which the comic papers make much capital, but she is vastly convenient. She and a companion rent a room in a business quarter, and copy manuscript at the rate of six annas a page. Only a woman can manage a type–writing machine, because she has served apprenticeship to the sewing–machine. She can earn as much as a hundred dollars a month, and professes to regard this form of bread–winning as her natural destiny. But oh how she hates it in her heart of hearts! When I had got over the surprise of doing business and trying to give orders to a young woman of coldly clerkly aspect, intrenched behind gold–rimmed spectacles, I made inquiries concerning the pleasures of this independence. They liked it—indeed, they did. 'Twas the natural fate of almost all girls,—the recognised custom in America, —and I was a barbarian not to see it in that light.

"Well, and after?" said I. "What happens?"

"We work for our bread."

"And then what do you expect?"

"Then we shall work for our bread."

"Till you die?"

"Ye–es—unless—"

"Unless what? A man works till he dies."

"So shall we." This without enthusiasm—"I suppose."

Said the partner in the firm audaciously: "Sometimes we marry our employers—at least that's what the newspapers say." The hand banged on half a dozen of the keys of the machine at once. "Yes, I don't care. I hate it—I *hate* it—I hate it, and you needn't look so!"

The senior partner was regarding the rebel with grave–eyed reproach.

"I thought you did," said I. "I don't suppose American girls are much different from English ones in instinct."

"Isn't it Théophile Gautier who says that the only differences between country and country lie in the slang and the uniform of the police?"

Now in the name of all the Gods at once, what is one to say to a young lady (who in England would be a Person) who earns her own bread, and very naturally hates the employ, and slings out–of–the–way quotations at your head? That one falls in love with her goes without saying; but that is not enough.

A mission should be established.

No. XXVI

Takes Me Through Bret Harte's Country, and to Portland With "Old Man California." Explains How Two Vagabonds Became Homesick Through Looking at Other People's Houses - "I Walked in the Lonesome Even, and Who So Sad as I, as I Saw the Young Men and Maidens Merrily Passing By?"

San Francisco has only one drawback. 'Tis hard to leave. When like the pious Hans Breitmann I "cut that city by the sea" it was with regrets for the pleasant places left behind, for the men who were so clever, and the women who were so witty, for the "dives," the beer–halls, the bucket–shops, and the poker–hells where humanity was going to the Devil with shouting and laughter and song and the rattle of dice–boxes. I would fain have stayed, but I feared that an evil end would come to me when my money was all spent and I descended to the street corner. A voice inside me said: "Get out of this. Go north. Strike for Victoria and Vancouver. Bask for a day under the shadow of the old flag." So I set forth from San Francisco to Portland in Oregon, and that was a railroad run of thirty–six hours.

The Oakland railway terminus, whence all the main lines start, does not own anything approaching to a platform. A yard with a dozen or more tracks is roughly asphalted, and the traveller laden with hand–bags skips merrily across the metals in search of his own particular train. The bells of half a dozen shunting engines are tolling suggestively in his ears. If he is run down, so much the worse for him. "When the bell rings, look out for the locomotive." Long use has made the nation familiar and even contemptuous towards trains to an extent which God never intended. Women who in England would gather up their skirts and scud timorously over a level crossing in the country, here talk dress and babies under the very nose of the cow–catcher, and little children dally with the moving car in a manner horrible to behold. We pulled out at the wholly insignificant speed of twenty–five miles an hour through the streets of a suburb of fifty thousand, and in our progress among the carts and the children and the shop fronts slew nobody; at which I was not a little disappointed.

When the negro porter bedded me up for the night and I had solved the problem of undressing while lying down,—I was much cheered by the thought that if anything happened I should have to stay where I was and wait till the kerosene lamps set the overturned car alight and burned me to death. It is easier to get out of a full theatre than to leave a Pullman in haste.

By the time I had discovered that a profusion of nickel–plating, plush, and damask does not compensate for closeness and dust, the

train ran into the daylight on the banks of the Sacramento River. A few windows were gingerly opened after the bunks had been reconverted into seats, but that long coffin–car was by no means ventilated, and we were a gummy, grimy crew who sat there. At six in the morning the heat was distinctly unpleasant, but seeing with the eye of the flesh that I was in Bret Harte's own country, I rejoiced. There were the pines and madrone–clad hills his miners lived and fought among; there was the heated red earth that showed whence the gold had been washed; the dry gulch, the red, dusty road where Hamblin was used to stop the stage in the intervals of his elegant leisure and superior card–play; there was the timber felled and sweating resin in the sunshine; and, above all, there was the quivering pungent heat that Bret Harte drives into your dull brain with the magic of his pen. When we stopped at a collection of packing–cases dignified by the name of a town, my felicity was complete. The name of the place was something offensive,—Amberville or Jacksonburgh,—but it owned a cast–iron fountain worthy of a town of thirty thousand. Next to the fountain was a "hotel," at least seventeen feet high including the chimney, and next to the hotel was the forest—the pine, the oak, and the untrammelled undergrowth of the hillside. A cinnamon–bear cub—Baby Sylvester in the very fur—was tied to the stump of a tree opposite the fountain; a pack–mule dozed in the dust–haze, a red–shirted miner in a slouch hat supported the hotel, a blue–shirted miner swung round the corner, and the two went indoors for a drink. A girl came out of the only other house but one, and shading her eyes with a brown hand stared at the panting train. She didn't recognise me, but I knew her—had known her for years. She was M'liss. She never married the schoolmaster, after all, but stayed, always young and always fair, among the pines. I knew Red–Shirt too. He was one of the bearded men who stood back when Tennessee claimed his partner from the hands of the Law. The Sacramento River, a few yards away, shouted that all these things were true. The train went on while Baby Sylvester stood on his downy head, and M'liss swung her sun–bonnet by the strings.

"What do you think?" said a lawyer who was travelling with me. "It's a new world to you; isn't it?"

"No. It's quite familiar. I was never out of England; it's as if I saw it all."

Quick as light came the answer: "'Yes, they lived once thus at Venice when the miners were the kings.'"

I loved that lawyer on the spot. We drank to Bret Harte who, you remember, "claimed California, but California never claimed him. He's turned English."

Lying back in state, I waited for the flying miles to turn over the

pages of the book I knew. They brought me all I desired—from the Man of no Account sitting on a stump and playing with a dog, to "that most sarcastic man, the quiet Mister Brown." He boarded the train from out of the woods, and there was venom and sulphur on his tongue. He had just lost a lawsuit. Only Yuba Bill failed to appear. The train had taken his employment from him. A nameless ruffian backed me into a corner and began telling me about the resources of the country, and what it would eventually become. All I remember of his lecture was that you could catch trout in the Sacramento River—the stream that we followed so faithfully.

Then rose a tough and wiry old man with grizzled hair and made inquiries about the trout. To him was added the secretary of a life–insurance company. I fancy he was travelling to rake in the dead that the train killed. But he, too, was a fisherman, and the two turned to meward. The frankness of a Westerner is delightful. They tell me that in the Eastern States I shall meet another type of man and a more reserved. The Californian always speaks of the man from the New England States as a different breed. It is our Punjab and Madras over again, but more so. The old man was on a holiday in search of fish. When he discovered a brother–loafer he proposed a confederation of rods. Quoth the insurance–agent, "I'm not staying any time in Portland, but I will introduce you to a man there who'll tell you about fishing." The two told strange tales as we slid through the forests and saw afar off the snowy head of a great mountain. There were vineyards, fruit orchards, and wheat fields where the land opened out, and every ten miles or so, twenty or thirty wooden houses and at least three churches. A large town would have a population of two thousand and an infinite belief in its own capacities. Sometimes a flaring advertisement flanked the line, calling for men to settle down, take up the ground, and make their home there. At a big town we could pick up the local newspaper, narrow as the cutting edge of a chisel and twice as keen—a journal filled with the prices of stock, notices of improved reaping and binding machines, movements of eminent citizens—"whose fame beyond their own abode extends—for miles along the Harlem road." There was not much grace about these papers, but all breathed the same need for good men, steady men who would plough, and till, and build schools for their children, and make a township in the hills. Once only I found a sharp change in the note and a very pathetic one. I think it was a young soul in trouble who was writing poetry. The editor had jammed the verses between the flamboyant advertisement of a real–estate agent—a man who sells you land and lies about it—and that of a Jew tailor who disposed of "nobby" suits at "cut–throat prices." Here are two verses; I think they tell their own story:—

"God made the pine with its root in the earth,
Its top in the sky;
They have burned the pine to increase the worth
Of the wheat and the silver rye.

"Go weigh the cost of the soul of the pine
Cut off from the sky;
And the price of the wheat that grows so fine
And the worth of the silver rye!"

The thin–lipped, keen–eyed men who boarded the train would not read that poetry, or, if they did, would not understand. Heaven guard that poor pine in the desert and keep "its top in the sky"!

When the train took to itself an extra engine and began to breathe heavily, some one said that we were ascending the Siskiyou Mountains. We had been climbing steadily from San Francisco, and at last won to over four thousand feet above sea–level, always running through forest. Then, naturally enough, we came down, but we dropped two thousand two hundred feet in about thirteen miles. It was not so much the grinding of the brakes along the train, or the sight of three curves of track apparently miles below us, or even the vision of a goods–train apparently just under our wheels, or even the tunnels, that made me reflect; it was the trestles over which we crawled,—trestles something over a hundred feet high and looking like a collection of match–sticks.

"I guess our timber is as much a curse as a blessing," said the old man from Southern California. "These trestles last very well for five or six years; then they get out of repair, and a train goes through 'em, or else a forest fire burns 'em up."

This was said in the middle of a groaning, shivering trestle. An occasional plate–layer took a look at us as we went down, but that railway didn't waste men on inspection duty. Very often there were cattle on the track, against which the engine used a diabolical form of whistling. The old man had been a driver in his youth, and beguiled the way with cheery anecdotes of what might be expected if we fouled a young calf.

"You see, they get their legs under the cow–catcher and that'll put an engine off the line. I remember when a hog wrecked an excursion–train and killed sixty people. 'Guess the engineer will look out, though."

There is considerably too much guessing about this large nation. As one of them put it rather forcibly: "We guess a trestle will stand for ever, and we guess that we can patch up a washout on the track, and

we guess the road's clear, and sometimes we guess ourselves into the *deepot*, and sometimes we guess ourselves into Hell."

* * * * *

The descent brought us far into Oregon and a timber and wheat country. We drove through wheat and pine in alternate slices, but pine chiefly, till we reached Portland, which is a city of fifty thousand, possessing the electric light of course, equally, of course, devoid of pavements, and a port of entry about a hundred miles from the sea at which big steamers can load. It is a poor city that cannot say it has no equal on the Pacific coast. Portland shouts this to the pines which run down from a thousand–foot ridge clear up to the city. You may sit in a bedizened bar–room furnished with telephone and clicker, and in half an hour be in the woods.

Portland produces lumber and jig–saw fittings for houses, and beer and buggies, and bricks and biscuit; and, in case you should miss the fact, there are glorified views of the town hung up in public places with the value of the products set down in dollars. All this is excellent and exactly suitable to the opening of a new country; but when a man tells you it is civilisation, you object. The first thing that the civilised man learns to do is to keep the dollars in the background, because they are only the oil of the machine that makes life go smoothly.

Portland is so busy that it can't attend to its own sewage or paving, and the four–storey brick blocks front cobble–stones and plank sidewalks and other things much worse. I saw a foundation being dug out. The sewage of perhaps twenty years ago, had thoroughly soaked into the soil, and there was a familiar and Oriental look about the compost that flew up with each shovel–load. Yet the local papers, as was just and proper, swore there was no place like Portland, Oregon, U.S.A., chronicled the performances of Oregonians, "claimed" prominent citizens elsewhere as Oregonians, and fought tooth and nail for dock, rail, and wharfage projects. And you could find men who had thrown in their lives with the city, who were bound up in it, and worked their life out for what they conceived to be its material prosperity. Pity it is to record that in this strenuous, labouring town there had been, a week before, a shooting–case. One well–known man had shot another on the street, and was now pleading self–defence because the other man had, or the murderer thought he had, a pistol about him. Not content with shooting him dead, he squibbed off his revolver into him as he lay. I read the pleadings, and they made me ill. So far as I could judge, if the dead man's body had been found with a pistol on it, the shooter would have gone free. Apart from the mere

murder, cowardly enough in itself, there was a refinement of cowardice in the plea. Here in this civilised city the surviving brute was afraid he would be shot—fancied he saw the other man make a motion to his hip–pocket, and so on. Eventually the jury disagreed. And the degrading thing was that the trial was reported by men who evidently understood all about the pistol, was tried before a jury who were versed in the etiquette of the hip–pocket, and was discussed on the streets by men equally initiate.

But let us return to more cheerful things. The insurance–agent introduced us as friends to a real–estate man, who promptly bade us go up the Columbia River for a day while he made inquiries about fishing. There was no overwhelming formality. The old man was addressed as "California," I answered indifferently to "England" or "Johnny Bull," and the real–estate man was "Portland." This was a lofty and spacious form of address.

So California and I took a steamboat, and upon a sumptuous blue and gold morning steered up the Willamette River, on which Portland stands, into the great Columbia—the river that brings the salmon that goes into the tin that is emptied into the dish when the extra guest arrives in India. California introduced me to the boat and the scenery, showed me the "texas," the difference between a "tow–head" and a "sawyer," and the precise nature of a "slue." All I remember is a delightful feeling that Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn and Mississippi Pilot were quite true, and that I could almost recognise the very reaches down which Huck and Jim had drifted. We were on the border line between Oregon State and Washington Territory, but that didn't matter. The Columbia was the Mississippi so far as I was concerned. We ran along the sides of wooded islands whose banks were caving in with perpetual smashes, and we skipped from one side to another of the mile–wide stream in search of a channel, exactly like a Mississippi steamer, and when we wanted to pick up or set down a passenger we chose a soft and safe place on the shore and ran our very snub nose against it. California spoke to each new passenger as he came aboard and told me the man's birthplace. A long–haired tender of kine crashed out of the underwood, waved his hat, and was taken aboard forthwith. "South Carolina," said California, almost without looking at him. "When he talks you will hear a softer dialect than mine." And it befell as he said: whereat I marvelled, and California chuckled. Every island in the river carried fields of rich wheat, orchards, and a white, wooden house; or else, if the pines grew very thickly, a sawmill, the tremulous whine of whose saws flickered across the water like the drone of a tired bee. From remarks he let fall I gathered that California owned timber ships and dealt in lumber, had ranches too, a partner, and everything handsome about him; in

addition to a chequered career of some thirty–five years. But he looked almost as disreputable a loafer as I.

"Say, young feller, we're going to see scenery now. You shout and sing," said California, when the bland wooded islands gave place to bolder outlines, and the steamer ran herself into a hornet's nest of black–fanged rocks not a foot below the boiling broken water. We were trying to get up a slue, or back channel, by a short cut, and the stern–wheel never spun twice in the same direction. Then we hit a floating log with a jar that ran through our system, and then, white–bellied, open–gilled, spun by a dead salmon—a lordly twenty–pound Chinook salmon who had perished in his pride. "You'll see the salmon–wheels 'fore long," said a man who lived "way back on the Washoogle," and whose hat was spangled with trout–flies. "Those Chinook salmon never rise to the fly. The canneries take them by the wheel." At the next bend we sighted a wheel—an infernal arrangement of wire–gauze compartments worked by the current and moved out from a barge in shore to scoop up the salmon as he races up the river. California swore long and fluently at the sight, and the more fluently when he was told of the weight of a good night's catch—some thousands of pounds. Think of the black and bloody murder of it! But you out yonder insist in buying tinned salmon, and the canneries cannot live by letting down lines.

About this time California was struck with madness. I found him dancing on the fore–deck shouting, "Isn't she a daisy? Isn't she a darling?" He had found a waterfall—a blown thread of white vapour that broke from the crest of a hill—a waterfall eight hundred and fifty feet high whose voice was even louder than the voice of the river. "Bridal Veil," jerked out the purser. "D—n that purser and the people who christened her! Why didn't they call her Mechlin lace Falls at fifty dollars a yard while they were at it?" said California. And I agreed with him. There are many "bridal veil" falls in this country, but few, men say, lovelier than those that come down to the Columbia River. Then the scenery began—poured forth with the reckless profusion of Nature, who when she wants to be amiable succeeds only in being oppressively magnificent. The river was penned between gigantic stone walls crowned with the ruined bastions of Oriental palaces. The stretch of green water widened and was guarded by pine–clad hills three thousand feet high. A wicked devil's thumb nail of rock shot up a hundred feet in midstream. A sand–bar of blinding white sand gave promise of flat country that the next bend denied; for, lo! we were running under a triple tier of fortifications, lava–topped, pine–clothed, and terrible. Behind them the white dome of Mount Hood ran fourteen thousand feet into the blue, and at their feet the river threshed among a belt of cottonwood trees. There I sat down and looked at California

half out of the boat in his anxiety to see both sides of the river at once. He had seen my note–book, and it offended him. "Young feller, let her go—and you shut your head. It's not you nor anybody like you can put this down. Black, the novelist, he could. He can describe salmon–fishing, *he* can." And he glared at me as though he expected me to go and do likewise.

"I can't. I know it," I said humbly.

"Then thank God that you came along this way."

We reached a little railway, on an island, which was to convey us to a second steamer, because, as the purser explained, the river was "a trifle broken." We had a six–mile run, sitting in the sunshine on a dummy wagon, whirled just along the edge of the river–bluffs. Sometimes we dived into the fragrant pine woods, ablaze with flowers; but we generally watched the river now narrowed into a turbulent millrace. Just where the whole body of water broke in riot over a series of cascades, the United States Government had chosen to build a lock for steamers, and the stream was one boiling, spouting mob of water. A log shot down the race, struck on a rock, split from end to end, and rolled over in white foam. I shuddered because my toes were not more than sixty feet above the log, and I feared that a stray splinter might have found me. But the train ran into the river on a sort of floating trestle, and I was upon another steamer ere I fully understood why. The cascades were not two hundred yards below us, and when we cast off to go upstream, the rush of the river, ere the wheel struck the water, dragged us as though we had been towed. Then the country opened out; and California mourned for his lost bluffs and crags, till we struck a rock wall four hundred feet high, crowned by the gigantic figure of a man watching us. On a rocky island we saw the white tomb of an old–time settler who had made his money in San Francisco, but had chosen to be buried in an Indian burying–ground. A decayed wooden "wickyup," where the bones of the Indian dead are laid, almost touched the tomb. The river ran into a canal of basaltic rock, painted in yellow, vermilion, and green by Indians and, by inferior brutes, adorned with advertisements of "bile beans." We had reached The Dalles—the centre of a great sheep and wool district, and the head of navigation.

When an American arrives at a new town it is his bounden duty to "take it in." California swung his coat over his shoulder with the gesture of a man used to long tramps, and together, at eight in the evening, we explored The Dalles. The sun had not yet set, and it would be light for at least another hour. All the inhabitants seemed to own a little villa and one church apiece. The young men were out walking with the young maidens, the old folks were sitting on the front steps,—not the ones that led to the religiously shuttered best

drawing–room, but the side–front–steps,—and the husbands and wives were tying back pear trees or gathering cherries. A scent of hay reached me, and in the stillness we could hear the cattle bells as the cows came home across the lava–sprinkled fields. California swung down the wooden pavements, audibly criticising the housewives' hollyhocks and the more perfect ways of pear–grafting, and, as the young men and maidens passed, giving quaint stories of his youth. I felt that I knew all the people aforetime, I was so interested in them and their life. A woman hung over a gate talking to another woman, and as I passed I heard her say, "skirts," and again, "skirts," and "I'll send you over the pattern"; and I knew they were talking dress. We stumbled upon a young couple saying good–by in the twilight, and "When shall I see you again?" quoth he; and I understood that to the doubting heart the tiny little town we paraded in twenty minutes might be as large as all London and as impassable as an armed camp. I gave them both my blessing, because "When shall I see you again?" is a question that lies very near to hearts of all the world. The last garden gate shut with a click that travelled far down the street, and the lights of the comfortable families began to shine in the confidingly uncurtained windows.

"Say, Johnny Bull, doesn't all this make you feel lonesome?" said California. "Have you got any folks at home? So've I—a wife and five children—and I'm only on a holiday."

"And I'm only on a holiday," I said, and we went back to the Spittoon–wood Hotel. Alas! for the peace and purity of the little town that I had babbled about. At the back of a shop, and discreetly curtained, was a room where the young men who had been talking to the young maidens could play poker and drink and swear, and on the shop were dime novels of bloodshed to corrupt the mind of the little boy, and prurient servant–girl–slush yarns to poison the mind of the girl. California only laughed grimly. He said that all these little one–house towns were pretty much the same all over the States.

That night I dreamed I was back in India with no place to sleep in; tramping up and down the Station mall and asking everybody, "When shall I see you again?"

No. XXVII

Shows How I Caught Salmon in the Clackamas - "The Race is Not to the Swift Nor the Battle to the Strong; but Time and Chance Cometh to All."

I have lived! The American Continent may now sink under the sea, for I have taken the best that it yields, and the best was neither dollars, love, nor real estate. Hear now, gentlemen of the Punjab Fishing Club, who whip the reaches of the Tavi, and you who painfully import trout to Ootacamund, and I will tell you how "old man California" and I went fishing, and you shall envy. We returned from The Dalles to Portland by the way we had come, the steamer stopping *en route* to pick up a night's catch of one of the salmon wheels on the river, and to deliver it at a cannery down–stream. When the proprietor of the wheel announced that his take was two thousand two hundred and thirty pounds' weight of fish, "and not a heavy catch, neither," I thought he lied. But he sent the boxes aboard, and I counted the salmon by the hundred—huge fifty–pounders, hardly dead, scores of twenty and thirty–pounders, and a host of smaller fish.

The steamer halted at a rude wooden warehouse built on piles in a lonely reach of the river, and sent in the fish. I followed them up a scale–strewn, fishy incline that led to the cannery. The crazy building was quivering with the machinery on its floors, and a glittering bank of tin–scraps twenty feet high showed where the waste was thrown after the cans had been punched. Only Chinamen were employed on the work, and they looked like blood–besmeared yellow devils, as they crossed the rifts of sunlight that lay upon the floor. When our consignment arrived, the rough wooden boxes broke of themselves as they were dumped down under a jet of water, and the salmon burst out in a stream of quicksilver. A Chinaman jerked up a twenty–pounder, beheaded and de–tailed it with two swift strokes of a knife, flicked out its internal arrangements with a third, and cast it into a bloody–dyed tank. The headless fish leaped from under his hands as though they were facing a rapid. Other Chinamen pulled them from the vat and thrust them under a thing like a chaff–cutter, which, descending, hewed them into unseemly red gobbets fit for the can. More Chinamen with yellow, crooked fingers, jammed the stuff into the cans, which slid down some marvellous machine forthwith, soldering their own tops as they passed. Each can was hastily tested for flaws, and then sunk, with a hundred companions, into a vat of boiling water, there to be half cooked for a few minutes. The cans bulged slightly after the operation, and were therefore slidden along by the trolleyful to men with needles and soldering irons, who vented

them, and soldered the aperture. Except for the label, the "finest Columbia salmon" was ready for the market. I was impressed, not so much with the speed of the manufacture, as the character of the factory. Inside, on a floor ninety by forty, the most civilised and murderous of machinery. Outside, three footsteps, the thick–growing pines and the immense solitude of the hills. Our steamer only stayed twenty minutes at that place, but I counted two hundred and forty finished cans, made from the catch of the previous night, ere I left the slippery, blood–stained, scale–spangled, oily floors, and the offal–smeared Chinamen.

We reached Portland, California and I, crying for salmon, and the real–estate man, to whom we had been intrusted by "Portland" the insurance man, met us in the street saying that fifteen miles away, across country, we should come upon a place called Clackamas where we might perchance find what we desired. And California, his coat–tails flying in the wind, ran to a livery stable and chartered a wagon and team forthwith. I could push the wagon about with one hand, so light was its structure. The team was purely American—that is to say, almost human in its intelligence and docility. Some one said that the roads were not good on the way to Clackamas and warned us against smashing the springs. "Portland," who had watched the preparations, finally reckoned "he'd come along too," and under heavenly skies we three companions of a day set forth; California carefully lashing our rods into the carriage, and the bystanders overwhelming us with directions as to the sawmills we were to pass, the ferries we were to cross, and the sign–posts we were to seek signs from. Half a mile from this city of fifty thousand souls we struck (and this must be taken literally) a plank–road that would have been a disgrace to an Irish village.

Then six miles of macadamised road showed us that the team could move. A railway ran between us and the banks of the Willamette, and another above us through the mountains. All the land was dotted with small townships, and the roads were full of farmers in their town wagons, bunches of tow–haired, boggle–eyed urchins sitting in the hay behind. The men generally looked like loafers, but their women were all well dressed. Brown hussar–braiding on a tailor–made jacket does not, however, consort with hay–wagons. Then we struck into the woods along what California called a "*camina reale*,"—a good road,—and Portland a "fair track." It wound in and out among fire–blackened stumps, under pine trees, along the corners of log–fences, through hollows which must be hopeless marsh in the winter, and up absurd gradients. But nowhere throughout its length did I see any evidence of road–making. There was a track,—you couldn't well get off it,—and it was all you could do to stay on it. The dust lay a

foot thick in the blind ruts, and under the dust we found bits of planking and bundles of brushwood that sent the wagon bounding into the air. Sometimes we crashed through bracken; anon where the blackberries grew rankest we found a lonely little cemetery, the wooden rails all awry, and the pitiful stumpy headstones nodding drunkenly at the soft green mulleins. Then with oaths and the sound of rent underwood a yoke of mighty bulls would swing down a "skid" road, hauling a forty–foot log along a rudely made slide. A valley full of wheat and cherry trees succeeded, and halting at a house we bought ten pound weight of luscious black cherries for something less than a rupee and got a drink of icy–cold water for nothing, while the untended team browsed sagaciously by the roadside. Once we found a wayside camp of horse–dealers lounging by a pool, ready for a sale or a swap, and once two sun–tanned youngsters shot down a hill on Indian ponies, their full creels banging from the high–pommelled saddles. They had been fishing, and were our brethren therefore. We shouted aloud in chorus to scare a wild–cat; we squabbled over the reasons that had led a snake to cross a road; we heaved bits of bark at a venturesome chipmunk, who was really the little grey squirrel of India and had come to call on me; we lost our way and got the wagon so beautifully fixed on a steep road that we had to tie the two hind–wheels to get it down. Above all, California told tales of Nevada and Arizona, of lonely nights spent out prospecting, of the slaughter of deer and the chase of men; of woman, lovely woman, who is a firebrand in a Western city, and leads to the popping of pistols, and of the sudden changes and chances of Fortune, who delights in making the miner or the lumberman a quadruplicate millionnaire, and in "busting" the railroad king. That was a day to be remembered, and it had only begun when we drew rein at a tiny farmhouse on the banks of the Clackamas and sought horse–feed and lodging ere we hastened to the river that broke over a weir not a quarter of a mile away.

Imagine a stream seventy yards broad divided by a pebbly island, running over seductive riffles, and swirling into deep, quiet pools where the good salmon goes to smoke his pipe after meals. Set such a stream amid fields of breast–high crops surrounded by hills of pines, throw in where you please quiet water, log–fenced meadows, and a hundred–foot bluff just to keep the scenery from growing too monotonous, and you will get some faint notion of the Clackamas.

Portland had no rod. He held the gaff and the whisky. California sniffed upstream and downstream across the racing water, chose his ground, and let the gaudy spoon drop in the tail of a riffle. I was getting my rod together when I heard the joyous shriek of the reel and the yells of California, and three feet of living silver leaped into the air far across the water. The forces were engaged. The salmon tore up

stream, the tense line cutting the water like a tide–rip behind him, and the light bamboo bowed to breaking. What happened after I cannot tell. California swore and prayed, and Portland shouted advice, and I did all three for what appeared to be half a day, but was in reality a little over a quarter of an hour, and sullenly our fish came home with spurts of temper, dashes head–on, and sarabands in the air; but home to the bank came he, and the remorseless reel gathered up the thread of his life inch by inch. We landed him in a little bay, and the spring–weight checked at eleven and a half pounds. Eleven and one–half pounds of fighting salmon! We danced a war dance on the pebbles, and California caught me round the waist in a hug that went near to breaking my ribs while he shouted: "Partner! Partner! This *is* glory! Now you catch your fish! Twenty–four years I've waited for this!"

I went into that icy–cold river and made my cast just above a weir, and all but foul–hooked a blue and black water–snake with a coral mouth who coiled herself on a stone and hissed maledictions. The next cast—ah, the pride of it, the regal splendour of it! the thrill that ran down from finger–tip to toe! The water boiled. He broke for the spoon and got it! There remained enough sense in me to give him all he wanted when he jumped not once but twenty times before the upstream flight that ran my line out to the last half–dozen turns, and I saw the nickled reel–bar glitter under the thinning green coils. My thumb was burned deep when I strove to stopper the line, but I did not feel it till later, for my soul was out in the dancing water praying for him to turn ere he took my tackle away. The prayer was heard. As I bowed back, the butt of the rod on my left hip–bone and the top joint dipping like unto a weeping willow, he turned, and I accepted each inch of slack that I could by any means get in as a favour from on High. There be several sorts of success in this world that taste well in the moment of enjoyment, but I question whether the stealthy theft of line from an able–bodied salmon who knows exactly what you are doing and why you are doing it is not sweeter than any other victory within human scope. Like California's fish, he ran at me head–on and leaped against the line, but the Lord gave me two hundred and fifty pairs of fingers in that hour. The banks and the pine trees danced dizzily round me, but I only reeled—reeled as for life—reeled for hours, and at the end of the reeling continued to give him the butt while he sulked in a pool. California was farther up the reach, and with the corner of my eye I could see him casting with long casts and much skill. Then he struck, and my fish broke for the weir in the same instant, and down the reach we came, California and I; reel answering reel even as the morning stars sung together.

The first wild enthusiasm of capture had died away. We were both at work now in deadly earnest to prevent the lines fouling, to

stall off a downstream rush for deep water just above the weir, and at the same time to get the fish into the shallow bay downstream that gave the best practicable landing. Portland bade us both be of good heart, and volunteered to take the rod from my hands. I would rather have died among the pebbles than surrender my right to play and land my first salmon, weight unknown, on an eight–ounce rod. I heard California, at my ear it seemed, gasping: "He's a fighter from Fightersville sure!" as his fish made a fresh break across the stream. I saw Portland fall off a log fence, break the overhanging bank, and clatter down to the pebbles, all sand and landing–net, and I dropped on a log to rest for a moment. As I drew breath the weary hands slackened their hold, and I forgot to give him the butt. A wild scutter in the water, a plunge and a break for the head–waters of the Clackamas was my reward, and the hot toil of reeling–in with one eye under the water and the other on the top joint of the rod, was renewed. Worst of all, I was blocking California's path to the little landing–bay aforesaid, and he had to halt and tire his prize where he was. "The Father of all Salmon!" he shouted. "For the love of Heaven, get your *trout* to bank, Johnny Bull." But I could no more. Even the insult failed to move me. The rest of the game was with the salmon. He suffered himself to be drawn, skipping with pretended delight at getting to the haven where I would fain have him. Yet no sooner did he feel shoal water under his ponderous belly than he backed like a torpedo–boat, and the snarl of the reel told me that my labour was in vain. A dozen times at least this happened ere the line hinted he had given up that battle and would be towed in. He was towed. The landing–net was useless for one of his size, and I would not have him gaffed. I stepped into the shallows and heaved him out with a respectful hand under the gill, for which kindness he battered me about the legs with his tail, and I felt the strength of him and was proud. California had taken my place in the shallows, his fish hard held. I was up the bank lying full length on the sweet–scented grass, and gasping in company with my first salmon caught, played and landed on an eight–ounce rod. My hands were cut and bleeding. I was dripping with sweat, spangled like harlequin with scales, wet from the waist down, nose–peeled by the sun, but utterly, supremely, and consummately happy. He, the beauty, the darling, the daisy, my Salmon Bahadur, weighed twelve pounds, and I had been seven and thirty minutes bringing him to bank! He had been lightly hooked on the angle of the right jaw, and the hook had not wearied him. That hour I sat among princes and crowned heads—greater than them all. Below the bank we heard California scuffling with his salmon, and swearing Spanish oaths. Portland and I assisted at the capture, and the fish dragged the spring–balance out by the roots. It was only

constructed to weigh up to fifteen pounds. We stretched the three fish on the grass,—the eleven and a half, the twelve, and fifteen pounder,—and we swore an oath that all who came after should merely be weighed and put back again.

How shall I tell the glories of that day so that you may be interested? Again and again did California and I prance down that reach to the little bay, each with a salmon in tow, and land him in the shallows. Then Portland took my rod, and caught some ten–pounders, and my spoon was carried away by an unknown leviathan. Each fish, for the merits of the three that had died so gamely, was hastily hooked on the balance and flung back, Portland recording the weight in a pocket–book, for he was a real–estate man. Each fish fought for all he was worth, and none more savagely than the smallest—a game little six–pounder. At the end of six hours we added up the list. Total: 16 fish, aggregate weight 142 lbs. The score in detail runs something like this—it is only interesting to those concerned: 15, 11–1/2, 12, 10, 9–3/4, 8, and so forth; as I have said, nothing under six pounds, and three ten–pounders.

Very solemnly and thankfully we put up our rods—it was glory enough for all time—and returned weeping in each other's arms—weeping tears of pure joy—to that simple bare–legged family in the packing–case house by the waterside. The old farmer recollected days and nights of fierce warfare with the Indians—"way back in the Fifties," when every ripple of the Columbia River and her tributaries hid covert danger. God had dowered him with a queer crooked gift of expression, and a fierce anxiety for the welfare of his two little sons—tanned and reserved children who attended school daily, and spoke good English in a strange tongue. His wife was an austere woman who had once been kindly and perhaps handsome. Many years of toil had taken the elasticity out of step and voice. She looked for nothing better than everlasting work—the chafing detail of housework, and then a grave somewhere up the hill among the blackberries and the pines. But in her grim way she sympathised with her eldest daughter, a small and silent maiden of eighteen, who had thoughts very far from the meals she tended or the pans she scoured. We stumbled into the household at a crisis; and there was a deal of downright humanity in that same. A bad, wicked dressmaker had promised the maiden a dress in time for a to–morrow's railway journey, and, though the barefooted Georgie, who stood in very wholesome awe of his sister, had scoured the woods on a pony in search, that dress never arrived. So with sorrow in her heart, and a hundred Sister Anne glances up the road, she waited upon the strangers, and, I doubt not, cursed them for the wants that stood between her and her need for tears. It was a genuine little tragedy. The mother in a heavy, passionless voice rebuked her

impatience, yet sat bowed over a heap of sewing for the daughter's benefit. These things I beheld in the long marigold–scented twilight and whispering night, loafing round the little house with California, who unfolded himself like a lotus to the moon; or in the little boarded bunk that was our bedroom, swapping tales with Portland and the old man. Most of the yarns began in this way: "Red Larry was a bull–puncher back of Lone County, Montanna," or "There was a man riding the trail met a jack–rabbit sitting in a cactus," or "'Bout the time of the San Diego land boom, a woman from Monterey," etc. You can try to piece out for yourselves what sort of stories they were.

And next day California tucked me under his wing and told me we were going to see a city smitten by a boom, and catch trout. So we took a train and killed a cow—she wouldn't get out of the way, and the locomotive "chanced" her and slew—and crossing into Washington Territory won the town of Tacoma, which stands at the head of Puget Sound upon the road to Alaska and Vancouver.

California was right. Tacoma was literally staggering under a boom of the boomiest. I do not quite remember what her natural resources were supposed to be, though every second man shrieked a selection in my ear. They included coal and iron, carrots, potatoes, lumber, shipping, and a crop of thin newspapers all telling Portland that her days were numbered. California and I struck the place at twilight. The rude boarded pavements of the main streets rumbled under the heels of hundreds of furious men all actively engaged in hunting drinks and eligible corner–lots. They sought the drinks first. The street itself alternated five–storey business blocks of the later and more abominable forms of architecture with board shanties. Overhead the drunken telegraph, telephone, and electric–light wires tangled on the tottering posts whose butts were half–whittled through by the knife of the loafer. Down the muddy, grimy, unmetalled thoroughfare ran a horse–car line—the metals three inches above road level. Beyond this street rose many hills, and the town was thrown like a broken set of dominoes over all. A steam tramway—it left the track the only time I used it—was nosing about the hills, but the most prominent features of the landscape were the foundations in brick and stone of a gigantic opera house and the blackened stumps of the pines. California sized up the town with one comprehensive glance. "Big boom," said he; and a few instants later: "About time to step off, *I* think," meaning thereby that the boom had risen to its limit, and it would be expedient not to meddle with it. We passed down ungraded streets that ended abruptly in a fifteen–foot drop and a nest of brambles; along pavements that beginning in pine–plank ended in the living tree; by hotels with Turkish mosque trinketry on their shameless tops, and the pine stamps at their very doors; by a female seminary,

tall, gaunt and red, which a native of the town bade us marvel at, and we marvelled; by houses built in imitation of the ones on Nob Hill, San Francisco,—after the Dutch fashion; by other houses plenteously befouled with jig–saw work, and others flaring with the castlemented, battlemented bosh of the wooden Gothic school.

"You can tell just about when those fellers had their houses built," quoth California. "That one yonder wanted to be *I*talian, and his architect built him what he wanted. The new houses with the low straddle roofs and windows pitched in sideways and red brick walls are Dutch. That's the latest idea. I can read the history of the town." I had no occasion so to read. The natives were only too glad and too proud to tell me. The hotel walls bore a flaming panorama of Tacoma in which by the eye of faith I saw a faint resemblance to the real town. The hotel stationary advertised that Tacoma bore on its face all the advantages of the highest civilisation, and the newspapers sang the same tune in a louder key. The real–estate agents were selling house–lots on unmade streets miles away for thousands of dollars. On the streets—the rude, crude streets, where the unshaded electric light was fighting with the gentle northern twilight—men were babbling of money, town lots, and again money—how Alf or Ed had done such and such a thing that had brought him so much money; and round the corner in a creaking boarded hall the red–jerseyed Salvationists were calling upon mankind to renounce all and follow their noisy God. The men dropped in by twos and threes, listened silently for a while, and as silently went their way, the cymbals clashing after them in vain. I think it was the raw, new smell of fresh sawdust everywhere pervading the air that threw upon me a desolating homesickness. It brought back in a moment all remembrances of that terrible first night at school when the establishment has been newly whitewashed, and a soft smell of escaping gas mingles with the odour of trunks and wet overcoats. I was a little boy, and the school was very new. A vagabond among collarless vagabonds, I loafed up the street, looking into the fronts of little shops where they sold slop shirts at fancy prices, which shops I saw later described in the papers as "great." California had gone off to investigate on his own account, and presently returned, laughing noiselessly. "They are all mad here," he said, "all mad. A man nearly pulled a gun on me because I didn't agree with him that Tacoma was going to whip San Francisco on the strength of carrots and potatoes. I asked him to tell me what the town produced, and I couldn't get anything out of him except those two darned vegetables. Say, what do you think."

I responded firmly, "I'm going into British territory a little while—to draw breath."

"I'm going up the Sound, too, for a while," said he, "but I'm

coming back—coming back to our salmon on the Clackamas. A man has been pressing me to buy real estate here. Young feller, don't you buy real estate here."

California disappeared with a kindly wave of his overcoat into worlds other than mine,—good luck go with him for he was a true sportsman!—and I took a steamer up Puget Sound for Vancouver, which is the terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway. That was a queer voyage. The water, landlocked among a thousand islands, lay still as oil under our bows, and the wake of the screw broke up the unquivering reflections of pines and cliffs a mile away. 'Twas as though we were trampling on glass. No one, not even the Government, knows the number of islands in the Sound. Even now you can get one almost for the asking; can build a house, raise sheep, catch salmon, and become a king on a small scale—your subjects the Indians of the reservation, who glide among the islets in their canoes and scratch their hides monkeywise by the beach. A Sound Indian is unlovely and only by accident picturesque. His wife drives the canoe, but he himself is so thorough a mariner that he can spring up in his cockle–craft and whack his wife over the head with a paddle without tipping the whole affair into the water. This I have seen him do unprovoked. I fancy it must have been to show off before the whites.

Have I told you anything about Seattle—the town that was burned out a few weeks ago when the insurance men at San Francisco took their losses with a grin? In the ghostly twilight, just as the forest fires were beginning to glare from the unthrifty islands, we struck it—struck it heavily, for the wharves had all been burned down, and we tied up where we could, crashing into the rotten foundations of a boathouse as a pig roots in high grass. The town, like Tacoma, was built upon a hill. In the heart of the business quarters there was a horrible black smudge, as though a Hand had come down and rubbed the place smooth. I know now what being wiped out means. The smudge seemed to be about a mile long, and its blackness was relieved by tents in which men were doing business with the wreck of the stock they had saved. There were shouts and counter–shouts from the steamer to the temporary wharf, which was laden with shingles for roofing, chairs, trunks, provision–boxes, and all the lath and string arrangements out of which a western town is made. This is the way the shouts ran:—

"Oh, George! What's the best with you?"

"Nawthin'. Got the old safe out. She's burned to a crisp. Books all gone."

"'Save anythin'?"

"Bar'l o' crackers and my wife's bonnet. Goin' to start store on them though."

"Bully for you. Where's that Emporium? I'll drop in."

"Corner what used to be Fourth and Main—little brown tent close to militia picquet. Sa–ay! We're under martial law, an' all the saloons are shut down."

"Best for you, George. Some men gets crazy with a fire, an' liquor makes 'em crazier."

"'Spect any creator–condemned son of a female dog who has lost all his fixin's in a conflagration is going to put ice on his head an' run for Congress, do you? How'd you like us act?"

The Job's comforter on the steamer retired into himself.

"Oh George" dived into the bar for a drink.

P. S.—Among many curiosities I have unearthed one. It was a Face on the steamer—a face above a pointed straw–coloured beard, a face with thin lips and eloquent eyes. We conversed, and presently I got at the ideas of the Face. It was, though it lived for nine months of the year in the wilds of Alaska and British Columbia, an authority on the canon law of the Church of England—a zealous and bitter upholder of the supremacy of the aforesaid Church. Into my amazed ears, as the steamer plodded through the reflections of the stars, it poured the battle–cry of the Church Militant here on earth, and put forward as a foul injustice that in the prisons of British Columbia the Protestant chaplain did not always belong to the Church. The Face had no official connection with the august body, and by force of his life very seldom attended service.

"But," said he, proudly, "I should think it direct disobedience to the orders of my Church if I attended any other places of worship than those prescribed. I was once for three months in a place where there was only a Wesleyan Methodist chapel, and I never set foot in it once, Sir. Never once. 'Twould have been heresy. Rank heresy."

And as I leaned over the rail methought that all the little stars in the water were shaking with austere merriment! But it may have been only the ripple of the steamer, after all.

No. XXVIII

Takes Me From Vancouver to the Yellowstone National Park - "But Who Shall Chronicle the Ways of Common Folk, the Nights and Days Spent With Rough Goatherds on the Snows, and Travellers Come Whence No Man Knows?"

This day I know how a deserter feels. Here in Victoria, a hundred and forty miles out of America, the mail brings me news from our Home—the land of regrets. I was enjoying myself by the side of a trout–stream, and I feel inclined to apologise for every rejoicing breath I drew in the diamond clear air. The sickness, they said, is heavy with you; from Rewari to the south good men are dying. Two names come in by the mail of two strong men dead—men that I dined and jested with only a little time ago, and it seems unfair that I should be here, cut off from the chain–gang and the shot–drill of our weary life. After all, there is no life like it that we lead over yonder. Americans are Americans, and there are millions of them; English are English; but we of India are Us all the world over, knowing the mysteries of each other's lives and sorrowing for the death of a brother. How can I sit down and write to you of the mere joy of being alive? The news has killed the pleasure of the day for me, and I am ashamed of myself. There are seventy brook trout lying in a creel, fresh drawn from Harrison Hot Springs, and they do not console me. They are like the stolen apples that clinch the fact of a bad boy's playing truant. I would sell them all, with my heritage in the woods and air and the delight of meeting new and strange people, just to be back again in the old galling harness, the heat and the dust, the gatherings in the evenings by the flooded tennis–courts, the ghastly dull dinners at the Club when the very last woman has been packed off to the hills and the four or five surviving men ask the doctor the symptoms of incubating smallpox. I should be troubled in body, but at peace in the soul. O excellent and toil–worn public of mine—men of the brotherhood, griffins new joined from the February troopers, and gentlemen waiting for your off–reckonings—take care of yourselves and keep well! It hurts so when any die. There are so few of Us, and we know one another too intimately.

* * * * *

Vancouver three years ago was swept off by fire in sixteen minutes, and only one house was left standing. To–day it has a population of fourteen thousand people, and builds its houses out of

brick with dressed granite fronts. But a great sleepiness lies on Vancouver as compared with an American town: men don't fly up and down the streets telling lies, and the spittoons in the delightfully comfortable hotel are unused; the baths are free and their doors are unlocked. You do not have to dig up the hotel clerk when you want to bathe, which shows the inferiority of Vancouver. An American bade me notice the absence of bustle, and was alarmed when in a loud and audible voice I thanked God for it. "Give me granite—hewn granite and peace," quoth I, "and keep your deal boards and bustle for yourselves."

The Canadian Pacific terminus is not a very gorgeous place as yet, but you can be shot directly from the window of the train into the liner that will take you in fourteen days from Vancouver to Yokohama. The *Parthia*, of some five thousand tons, was at her berth when I came, and the sight of the ex–Cunard on what seemed to be a little lake was curious. Except for certain currents which are not much mentioned, but which make the entrance rather unpleasant for sailing–boats, Vancouver possesses an almost perfect harbour. The town is built all round and about the harbour, and young as it is, its streets are better than those of western America. Moreover, the old flag waves over some of the buildings, and this is cheering to the soul. The place is full of Englishmen who speak the English tongue correctly and with clearness, avoiding more blasphemy than is necessary, and taking a respectable length of time to getting outside their drinks. These advantages and others that I have heard about, such as the construction of elaborate workshops and the like by the Canadian Pacific in the near future, moved me to invest in real estate. He that sold it me was a delightful English Boy who, having tried for the Army and failed, had somehow meandered into a real–estate office, where he was doing well. I couldn't have bought it from an American. He would have overstated the case and proved me the possessor of the original Eden. All the Boy said was: "I give you my word it isn't on a cliff or under water, and before long the town ought to move out that way. I'd advise you to take it." And I took it as easily as a man buys a piece of tobacco. *Me voici*, owner of some four hundred well–developed pines, a few thousand tons of granite scattered in blocks at the roots of the pines, and a sprinkling of earth. That's a town–lot in Vancouver. You or your agent hold to it till property rises, then sell out and buy more land further out of town and repeat the process. I do not quite see how this sort of thing helps the growth of a town, but the English Boy says that it is the "essence of speculation," so it must be all right. But I wish there were fewer pines and rather less granite on my ground. Moved by curiosity and the lust of trout, I went seventy miles up the Canadian Pacific in one of the cross–Continent

cars, which are cleaner and less stuffy than the Pullman. A man who goes all the way across Canada is liable to be disappointed—not in the scenery, but in the progress of the country. So a batch of wandering politicians from England told me. They even went so far as to say that Eastern Canada was a failure and unprofitable. The place didn't move, they complained, and whole counties—they said provinces—lay under the rule of the Roman Catholic priests, who took care that the people should not be overcumbered with the good things of this world to the detriment of their souls. My interest was in the line—the real and accomplished railway which is to throw actual fighting troops into the East some day when our hold of the Suez Canal is temporarily loosened.

All that Vancouver wants is a fat earthwork fort upon a hill,—there are plenty of hills to choose from,—a selection of big guns, a couple of regiments of infantry, and later on a big arsenal. The raw self–consciousness of America would be sure to make her think these arrangements intended for her benefit, but she could be enlightened. It is not seemly to leave unprotected the head–end of a big railway; for though Victoria and Esquimalt, our naval stations on Vancouver Island, are very near, so also is a place called Vladivostok, and though Vancouver Narrows are strait, they allow room enough for a man–of–war. The people—I did not speak to more than two hundred of them—do not know about Russia or military arrangements. They are trying to open trade with Japan in lumber, and are raising fruit, wheat, and sometimes minerals. All of them agree that we do not yet know the resources of British Columbia, and all joyfully bade me note the climate, which was distinctly warm. "We never have killing cold here. It's the most perfect climate in the world." Then there are three perfect climates, for I have tasted 'em—California, Washington Territory, and British Columbia. I cannot say which is the loveliest.

When I left by steamer and struck across the Sound to our naval station at Victoria, Vancouver Island, I found in that quite English town of beautiful streets quite a colony of old men doing nothing but talking, fishing, and loafing at the Club. That means that the retired go to Victoria. On a thousand a year pension a man would be a millionnaire in these parts, and for four hundred he could live well. It was at Victoria they told me the tale of the fire in Vancouver. How the inhabitants of New Westminster, twelve miles from Vancouver, saw a glare in the sky at six in the evening, but thought it was a forest fire; how later bits of burnt paper flew about their streets, and they guessed that evil had happened; how an hour later a man rode into the city crying that there was no Vancouver left. All had been wiped out by the flames in sixteen minutes. How, two hours later, the Mayor of New Westminster having voted nine thousand dollars from the

Municipal funds, relief–wagons with food and blankets were pouring into where Vancouver stood. How fourteen people were supposed to have died in the fire, but how even now when they laid new foundations the workmen unearth charred skeletons, many more than fourteen. "That night," said the teller, "all Vancouver was houseless. The wooden town had gone in a breath. Next day they began to build in brick, and you have seen what they have achieved."

The sight afar off of three British men–of–war and a torpedo–boat consoled me as I returned from Victoria to Tacoma and discovered *en route* that I was surfeited with scenery. There is a great deal in the remark of a discontented traveller: "When you have seen a fine forest, a bluff, a river, and a lake you have seen all the scenery of western America. Sometimes the pine is three hundred feet high, and sometimes the rock is, and sometimes the lake is a hundred miles long. But it's all the same, don't you know. I'm getting sick of it." I dare not say getting sick. I'm only tired. If Providence could distribute all this beauty in little bits where people most wanted it,—among you in India,—it would be well. But it is *en masse*, overwhelming, with nobody but the tobacco–chewing captain of a river steamboat to look at it. Men said if I went to Alaska I should see islands even more wooded, snow–peaks loftier, and rivers more lovely than those around me. That decided me not to go to Alaska. I went east—east to Montana, after another horrible night in Tacoma among the men who spat. Why does the Westerner spit? It can't amuse him, and it doesn't interest his neighbour.

But I am beginning to mistrust. Everything good as well as everything bad is supposed to come from the East. Is there a shooting–scrape between prominent citizens? Oh, you'll find nothing of that kind in the East. Is there a more than usually revolting lynching? They don't do that in the East. I shall find out when I get there whether this unnatural perfection be real.

Eastward then to Montana I took my way for the Yellowstone National Park, called in the guide–books "Wonderland." But the real Wonderland began in the train. We were a merry crew. One gentleman announced his intention of paying no fare and grappled the conductor, who neatly cross–buttocked him through a double plate–glass window. His head was cut open in four or five places. A doctor on the train hastily stitched up the biggest gash, and he was dropped at a wayside station, spurting blood at every hair—a scarlet–headed and ghastly sight. The conductor guessed that he would die, and volunteered the information that there was no profit in monkeying with the North Pacific Railway.

Night was falling as we cleared the forests and sailed out upon a wilderness of sage brush. The desolation of Montgomery, the

wilderness of Sind, the hummock–studded desert of Bikaneer, are joyous and homelike compared to the impoverished misery of the sage. It is blue, it is stunted, it is dusty. It wraps the rolling hills as a mildewed shroud wraps the body of a long–dead man. It makes you weep for sheer loneliness, and there is no getting away from it. When Childe Roland came to the dark Tower he traversed the sage brush.

Yet there is one thing worse than sage unadulterated, and that is a prairie city. We stopped at Pasco Junction, and a man told me that it was the Queen City of the Prairie. I wish Americans didn't tell such useless lies. I counted fourteen or fifteen frame–houses, and a portion of a road that showed like a bruise on the untouched surface of the blue sage, running away and away up to the setting sun. The sailor sleeps with a half–inch plank between himself and death. He is at home beside the handful of people who curl themselves up o' nights with nothing but a frail scantling, almost as thin as a blanket, to shut out the unmeasurable loneliness of the sage.

When the train stopped on the road, as it did once or twice, the solid silence of the sage got up and shouted at us. It was like a nightmare, and one not in the least improved by having to sleep in an emigrant–car; the regularly ordained sleepers being full. There was a row in our car toward morning, a man having managed to get querulously drunk in the night. Up rose a Cornishman with a red head full of strategy, and strapped the obstreperous one, smiling largely as he did so, and a delicate little woman in a far bunk watched the fray and called the drunken man a "damned hog," which he certainly was, though she needn't have put it quite so coarsely. Emigrant cars are clean, but the accommodation is as hard as a plank bed.

Later we laid our bones down to crossing the Rockies. An American train can climb up the side of a house if need be, but it is not pleasant to sit in it. We clomb till we struck violent cold and an Indian reservation, and the noble savage came to look at us. He was a Flathead and unlovely. Most Americans are charmingly frank about the Indian. "Let us get rid of him as soon as possible," they say. "We have no use for him." Some of the men I meet have a notion that we in India are exterminating the native in the same fashion, and I have been asked to fix a date for the final extinguishment of the Aryan. I answer that it will be a long business. Very many Americans have an offensive habit of referring to natives as "heathen." Mahometans and Hindus are heathen alike in their eyes, and they vary the epithet with "pagan" and "idolater." But this is beside the matter, which is the Stampede Tunnel—our actual point of crossing the Rockies. Thank Heaven, I need never take that tunnel again! It is about two miles long, and in effect is nothing more than the gallery of a mine shored with timber and lighted with electric lamps. Black darkness would be

preferable, for the lamps just reveal the rough cutting of the rocks, and that is very rough indeed. The train crawls through, brakes down, and you can hear the water and little bits of stone falling on the roof of the car. Then you pray, pray fervently, and the air gets stiller and stiller, and you dare not take your unwilling eyes off the timber shoring, lest a prop should fall, for lack of your moral support. Before the tunnel was built you crossed in the open air by a switchback line. A watchman goes through the tunnel after each train, but that is no protection. He just guesses that another train will pull through, and the engine–driver guesses the same thing. Some day between the two of them there will be a cave in the tunnel. Then the enterprising reporter will talk about the shrieks and groans of the buried and the heroic efforts of the Press in securing first information, and—that will be all. Human life is of small account out here.

I was listening to yarns in the smoking–compartment of the Pullman, all the way to Helena, and with very few exceptions, each had for its point, violent, brutal, and ruffianly murder—murder by fraud and the craft of the savage—murder unavenged by the law, or at the most by an outbreak of fresh lawlessness. At the end of each tale I was assured that the old days had passed away, and that these were anecdotes of five years' standing. One man in particular distinguished himself by holding up to admiration the exploits of some cowboys of his acquaintance, and their skill in the use of the revolver. Each tale of horror wound up with "and that's the sort of man he was," as who should say: "Go and do likewise." Remember that the shootings, the cuttings, and the stabbings were not the outcome of any species of legitimate warfare; the heroes were not forced to fight for their lives. Far from it. The brawls were bred by liquor in which they assisted—in saloons and gambling–hells they were wont to "pull their guns" on a man, and in the vast majority of cases without provocation. The tales sickened me, but taught one thing. A man who carries a pistol may be put down as a coward—a person to be shut out from every decent mess and club, and gathering of civilised folk. There is neither chivalry nor romance in the weapon, for all that American authors have seen fit to write. I would I could make you understand the full measure of contempt with which certain aspects of Western life have inspired me. Let us try a comparison. Sometimes it happens that a young, a very young, man, whose first dress–coat is yet glossy, gets slightly flushed at a dinner–party among his seniors. After the ladies are gone, he begins to talk. He talks, you will remember, as a "man of the world" and a person of varied experiences, an authority on all things human and divine. The grey heads of the elders bow assentingly to his wildest statement; some one tries to turn the conversation when what the youngster conceives to be wit has

offended a sensibility; and another deftly slides the decanters beyond him as they circle round the table. You know the feeling of discomfort—pity mingled with aversion—over the boy who is making an exhibition of himself. The same emotion came back to me, when an old man who ought to have known better appealed from time to time for admiration of his pitiful sentiments. It was right in his mind to insult, to maim, and to kill; right to evade the law where it was strong and to trample over it where it was weak; right to swindle in politics, to lie in affairs of State, and commit perjury in matters of municipal administration. The car was full of little children, utterly regardless of their parents, fretful, peevish, spoilt beyond anything I have ever seen in Anglo–India. They in time would grow up into men such as sat in the smoker, and had no regard for the law; men who would conduct papers siding with defiance of any and every law. But it's of no consequence, as Mr. Toots says.

During the descent of the Rockies we journeyed for a season on a trestle only two hundred and eighty–six feet high. It was made of iron, but up till two years ago a wooden structure bore up the train, and was used long after it had been condemned by the civil engineers. Some day the iron one will come down, just as Stampede Tunnel will, and the results will be even more startling.

Late in the night we ran over a skunk—ran over it in the dark. Everything that has been said about the skunk is true. It is an Awesome Stink.

No. XXIX

Shows How Yankee Jim Introduced Me to Diana of the Crossways on the Banks of the Yellowstone, and How a German Jew Said I Was No True Citizen. Ends With the Celebration of the 4th of July and a Few Lessons Therefrom

Livingstone is a town of two thousand people, and the junction for the little side–line that takes you to the Yellowstone National Park. It lies in a fold of the prairie, and behind it is the Yellowstone River and the gate of the mountains through which the river flows. There is one street in the town, where the cowboy's pony and the little foal of the brood–mare in the buggy rest contentedly in the blinding sunshine while the cowboy gets himself shaved at the only other barber's shop, and swaps lies at the bar. I exhausted the town, including the saloons, in ten minutes, and got away on the rolling grass downs where I threw myself to rest. Directly under the hill I was on, swept a drove of horses in charge of two mounted men. That was a picture I shall not soon forget. A light haze of dust went up from the hoof–trodden green, scarcely veiling the unfettered deviltries of three hundred horses who very much wanted to stop and graze. "Yow! Yow! Yow!" yapped the mounted men in chorus like coyotes. The column moved forward at a trot, divided as it met a hillock and scattered into fan shape all among the suburbs of Livingstone. I heard the "snick" of a stock whip, half a dozen "Yow, yows," and the mob had come together again, and, with neighing and whickering and squealing and a great deal of kicking on the part of the youngsters, rolled like a wave of brown water toward the uplands.

I was within twenty feet of the leader, a grey stallion—lord of many brood–mares all deeply concerned for the welfare of their fuzzy foals. A cream–coloured beast—I knew him at once for the bad character of the troop—broke back, taking with him some frivolous fillies. I heard the snick of the whips somewhere in the dust, and the fillies came back at a canter, very shocked and indignant. On the heels of the last rode both the stockmen—picturesque ruffians who wanted to know "what in hell" I was doing there, waved their hats, and sped down the slope after their charges. When the noise of the troop had died there came a wonderful silence on all the prairie—that silence, they say, which enters into the heart of the old–time hunter and trapper and marks him off from the rest of his race. The town disappeared in the darkness, and a very young moon showed herself over a bald–headed, snow–flecked peak. Then the Yellowstone, hidden by the water–willows, lifted up its voice and sang a little song to the mountains, and an old horse that had crept up in the dusk breathed

inquiringly on the back of my neck. When I reached the hotel I found all manner of preparation under way for the 4th of July, and a drunken man with a Winchester rifle over his shoulder patrolling the sidewalk. I do not think he wanted any one. He carried the gun as other folk carry walking–sticks. None the less I avoided the direct line of fire and listened to the blasphemies of miners and stockmen till far into the night. In every bar–room lay a copy of the local paper, and every copy impressed it upon the inhabitants of Livingstone that they were the best, finest, bravest, richest, and most progressive town of the most progressive nation under Heaven; even as the Tacoma and Portland papers had belauded their readers. And yet, all my purblind eyes could see was a grubby little hamlet full of men without clean collars and perfectly unable to get through one sentence unadorned by three oaths. They raise horses and minerals round and about Livingstone, but they behave as though they raised cherubims with diamonds in their wings.

From Livingstone the National Park train follows the Yellowstone River through the gate of the mountains and over arid volcanic country. A stranger in the cars saw me look at the ideal trout–stream below the windows and murmured softly: "Lie off at Yankee Jim's if you want good fishing." They halted the train at the head of a narrow valley, and I leaped literally into the arms of Yankee Jim, sole owner of a log hut, an indefinite amount of hay–ground, and constructor of twenty–seven miles of wagon–road over which he held toll right. There was the hut—the river fifty yards away, and the polished line of metals that disappeared round a bluff. That was all. The railway added the finishing touch to the already complete loneliness of the place. Yankee Jim was a picturesque old man with a talent for yarns that Ananias might have envied. It seemed to me, presumptuous in my ignorance, that I might hold my own with the old–timer if I judiciously painted up a few lies gathered in the course of my wanderings. Yankee Jim saw every one of my tales and went fifty better on the spot. He dealt in bears and Indians—never less than twenty of each; had known the Yellowstone country for years, and bore upon his body marks of Indian arrows; and his eyes had seen a squaw of the Crow Indians burned alive at the stake. He said she screamed considerable. In one point did he speak the truth—as regarded the merits of that particular reach of the Yellowstone. He said it was alive with trout. It was. I fished it from noon till twilight, and the fish bit at the brown hook as though never a fat trout–fly had fallen on the water. From pebbly reaches, quivering in the heat–haze where the foot caught on stumps cut foursquare by the chisel–tooth of the beaver; past the fringe of the water–willow crowded with the breeding trout–fly and alive with toads and water–snakes; over the

drifted timber to the grateful shadow of big trees that darkened the holes where the fattest fish lay, I worked for seven hours. The mountain flanks on either side of the valley gave back the heat as the desert gives it, and the dry sand by the railway track, where I found a rattlesnake, was hot–iron to the touch. But the trout did not care for the heat. They breasted the boiling river for my fly and they got it. I simply dare not give my bag. At the fortieth trout I gave up counting, and I had leached the fortieth in less than two hours. They were small fish,—not one over two pounds,—but they fought like small tigers, and I lost three flies before I could understand their methods of escape. Ye gods! That was fishing, though it peeled the skin from my nose in strips.

At twilight Yankee Jim bore me off, protesting, to supper in the hut. The fish had prepared me for any surprise, wherefore when Yankee Jim introduced me to a young woman of five–and–twenty, with eyes like the deep–fringed eyes of the gazelle, and "on the neck the small head buoyant, like a bell–flower in its bed," I said nothing. It was all in the day's events. She was California–raised, the wife of a man who owned a stock–farm "up the river a little ways," and, with her husband, tenant of Yankee Jim's shanty. I know she wore list slippers and did not wear stays; but I know also that she was beautiful by any standard of beauty, and that the trout she cooked were fit for a king's supper. And after supper strange men loafed up in the dim delicious twilight, with the little news of the day—how a heifer had "gone strayed" from Nicholson's; how the widow at Grant's Fork wouldn't part with a little hayland nohow, though "she's an' her big brothers can't manage more than ha–af their land now. She's so darned proud." Diana of the Crossways entertained them in queenly wise, and her husband and Yankee Jim bade them sit right down and make themselves at home. Then did Yankee Jim uncurl his choicest lies on Indian warfare aforetime; then did the whisky–flask circle round the little crowd; then did Diana's husband 'low that he was quite handy with the lariat, but had seen men rope a steer by any foot or horn indicated; then did Diana unburden herself about her neighbours. The nearest house was three miles away, "but the women aren't nice, neighbourly folk. They talk so. They haven't got anything else to do seemingly. If a woman goes to a dance and has a good time, they talk, and if she wears a silk dress, they want to know how jest ranchin' folks—folk on a ranche—come by such things; and they make mischief down all the lands here from Gardiner City way back up to Livingstone. They're mostly Montanna raised, and they haven't been nowheres. Ah, how they talk!" "Were things like this," demanded Diana, "in the big world outside, whence I had come?" "Yes," I said, "things were very much the same all over the world," and I thought of

a far–away station in India where new dresses and the having of good times at dances raised cackle more grammatical perhaps, but no less venomous than the gossip of the "Montanna–raised" folk on the ranches of the Yellowstone.

Next morn I fished again and listened to Diana telling the story of her life. I forget what she told me, but I am distinctly aware that she had royal eyes and a mouth that the daughter of a hundred earls might have envied—so small and so delicately cut it was. "An' you come back an' see us again," said the simple–minded folk. "Come back an' we'll show you how to catch six–pound trout at the head of the cañon."

To–day I am in the Yellowstone Park, and I wish I were dead. The train halted at Cinnabar station, and we were decanted, a howling crowd of us, into stages, variously horsed, for the eight–mile drive to the first spectacle of the Park—a place called the Mammoth Hot Springs. "What means this eager, anxious throng?" I asked the driver. "You've struck one of Rayment's excursion parties—that's all—a crowd of creator–condemned fools mostly. Aren't you one of 'em?" "No," I said. "May I sit up here with you, great chief and man with a golden tongue? I do not know Mister Rayment. I belong to T. Cook and Son." The other person, from the quality of the material he handles, must be the son of a sea–cook. He collects masses of Down–Easters from the New England States and elsewhere and hurls them across the Continent and into the Yellowstone Park on tour. A brake–load of Cook's Continental tourists trapezing through Paris (I've seen 'em) are angels of light compared to the Rayment trippers. It is not the ghastly vulgarity, the oozing, rampant Bessemer–steel self–sufficiency and ignorance of the men that revolts me, so much as the display of these same qualities in the women–folk. I saw a new type in the coach, and all my dreams of a better and more perfect East died away. "Are these —um—persons here any sort of persons in their own places?" I asked a shepherd who appeared to be herding them.

"Why, certainly. They include very many prominent and representative citizens from seven States of the Union, and most of them are wealthy. Yes, *sir*. Representative and prominent."

We ran across bare hills on an unmetalled road under a burning sun in front of a volley of playful repartee from the prominent citizens inside. It was the 4th of July. The horses had American flags in their head–stalls, some of the women wore flags and coloured handkerchiefs in their belts, and a young German on the box–seat with me was bewailing the loss of a box of crackers. He said he had been sent to the Continent to get his schooling and so had lost his American accent; but no Continental schooling writes German Jew all over a man's face and nose. He was a rabid American citizen—one of a

very difficult class to deal with. As a general rule, praise unsparingly, and without discrimination. That keeps most men quiet: but some, if you fail to keep up a continuous stream of praise, proceed to revile the Old Country—Germans and Irish who are more Americans than the Americans are the chief offenders. This young American began to attack the English army. He had seen some of it on parade and he pitied the men in bearskins as "slaves." The citizen, by the way, has a contempt for his own army which exceeds anything you meet among the most illiberal classes in England. I admitted that our army was very poor, had done nothing, and had been nowhere. This exasperated him, for he expected an argument, and he trampled on the British Lion generally. Failing to move me, he vowed that I had no patriotism like his own. I said I had not, and further ventured that very few Englishmen had; which, when you come to think of it, is quite true. By the time he had proved conclusively that before the Prince of Wales came to the throne we should be a blethering republic, we struck a road that overhung a river, and my interest in "politics" was lost in admiration of the driver's skill as he sent his four big horses along that winding road. There was no room for any sort of accident—a shy or a swerve would have dropped us sixty feet into the roaring Gardiner River. Some of the persons in the coach remarked that the scenery, was "elegant." Wherefore, even at the risk of my own life, I did urgently desire an accident and the massacre of some of the more prominent citizens. What "elegance" lies in a thousand–foot pile of honey–coloured rock, riven into peak and battlement, the highest peak defiantly crowned by an eagle's nest, the eaglet peering into the gulf and screaming for his food, I could not for the life of me understand. But they speak a strange tongue.

En route we passed other carriages full of trippers, who had done their appointed five days in the Park, and yelped at us fraternally as they disappeared in clouds of red dust. When we struck the Mammoth Hot Spring Hotel—a huge yellow barn—a sign–board informed us that the altitude was six thousand two hundred feet. The Park is just a howling wilderness of three thousand square miles, full of all imaginable freaks of a fiery nature. An hotel company, assisted by the Secretary of State for the Interior, appears to control it; there are hotels at all the points of interest, guide–books, stalls for the sale of minerals, and so forth, after the model of Swiss summer places.

The tourists—may their master die an evil death at the hand of a mad locomotive!—poured into that place with a joyful whoop, and, scarce washing the dust from themselves, began to celebrate the 4th of July. They called it "patriotic exercises"; elected a clergyman of their own faith as president, and, sitting on the landing of the first floor, began to make speeches and read the Declaration of Independence.

The clergyman rose up and told them they were the greatest, freest, sublimest, most chivalrous, and richest people on the face of the earth, and they all said Amen. Another clergyman asserted in the words of the Declaration that all men were created equal, and equally entitled to Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. I should like to know whether the wild and woolly West recognises this first right as freely as the grantors intended. The clergyman then bade the world note that the tourists included representatives of seven of the New England States; whereat I felt deeply sorry for the New England States in their latter days. He opined that this running to and fro upon the earth, under the auspices of the excellent Rayment, would draw America more closely together, especially when the Westerners remembered the perils that they of the East had surmounted by rail and river. At duly appointed intervals the congregation sang "My country, 'tis of thee" to the tune of "God save the Queen" (here they did not stand up) and the "Star–Spangled Banner" (here they did), winding up the exercise with some doggrel of their own composition to the tune of "John Brown's Body," movingly setting forth the perils before alluded to. They then adjourned to the verandahs and watched fire–crackers of the feeblest, exploding one by one, for several hours.

What amazed me was the calm with which these folks gathered together and commenced to belaud their noble selves, their country, and their "institootions" and everything else that was theirs. The language was, to these bewildered ears, wild advertisement, gas, bunkum, blow, anything you please beyond the bounds of common sense. An archangel, selling town–lots on the Glassy Sea, would have blushed to the tips of his wings to describe his property in similar terms. Then they gathered round the pastor and told him his little sermon was "perfectly glorious," really grand, sublime, and so forth, and he bridled ecclesiastically. At the end a perfectly unknown man attacked me and asked me what I thought of American patriotism. I said there was nothing like it in the Old Country. By the way, always tell an American this. It soothes him.

Then said he: "Are you going to get out your letters,—your letters of naturalisation?"

"Why?" I asked.

"I presoom you do business in this country, and make money out of it,—and it seems to me that it would be your dooty."

"Sir," said I, sweetly, "there is a forgotten little island across the seas called England. It is not much bigger than the Yellowstone Park. In that island a man of your country could work, marry, make his fortune or twenty fortunes, and die. Throughout his career not one soul would ask him whether he were a British subject or a child of the Devil. Do you understand?"

I think he did, because he said something about "Britishers" which wasn't complimentary.

No. XXX

Shows How I Entered Mazanderan of the Persians and Saw Devils of Every Colour, and Some Troopers. Hell and the Old Lady From Chicago. the Captain and the Lieutenant - "That Desolate Land and Lone Where the Big Horn and Yellowstone Roar Down Their Mountain Path."

Twice have I written this letter from end to end. Twice have I torn it up, fearing lest those across the water should say that I had gone mad on a sudden. Now we will begin for the third time quite solemnly and soberly. I have been through the Yellowstone National Park in a buggy, in the company of an adventurous old lady from Chicago and her husband, who disapproved of scenery as being "ongodly." I fancy it scared them.

We began, as you know, with the Mammoth Hot Springs. They are only a gigantic edition of those pink and white terraces not long ago destroyed by earthquake in New Zealand. At one end of the little valley in which the hotel stands the lime–laden springs that break from the pine–covered hillsides have formed a frozen cataract of white, lemon, and palest pink formation, through and over and in which water of the warmest bubbles and drips and trickles from pale–green lagoon to exquisitely fretted basin. The ground rings hollow as a kerosene–tin, and some day the Mammoth Hotel, guests and all, will sink into the caverns below and be turned into a stalactite. When I set foot on the first of the terraces, a tourist–trampled ramp of scabby grey stuff, I met a stream of iron–red hot water which ducked into a hole like a rabbit. Followed a gentle chuckle of laughter, and then a deep, exhausted sigh from nowhere in particular. Fifty feet above my head a jet of steam rose up and died out in the blue. It was worse than the boiling mountain at Myanoshita. The dirty white deposit gave place to lime whiter than snow; and I found a basin which some learned hotel–keeper has christened Cleopatra's pitcher, or Mark Antony's whisky–jug, or something equally poetical. It was made of frosted silver; it was filled with water as clear as the sky. I do not know the depth of that wonder. The eye looked down beyond grottoes and caves of beryl into an abyss that communicated directly with the central fires of earth. And the pool was in pain, so that it could not refrain from talking about it; muttering and chattering and moaning. From the lips of the lime–ledges, forty feet under water, spurts of silver bubbles would fly up and break the peace of the crystal atop. Then the whole pool would shake and grow dim, and there were noises. I removed myself only to find other pools all equally unhappy, rifts in the ground, full of running, red–hot water, slippery sheets of

deposit overlaid with greenish grey hot water, and here and there pit–holes dry as a rifled tomb in India, dusty and waterless. Elsewhere the infernal waters had first boiled dead and then embalmed the pines and underwood, or the forest trees had taken heart and smothered up a blind formation with greenery, so that it was only by scraping the earth you could tell what fires had raged beneath. Yet the pines will win the battle in years to come, because Nature, who first forges all her work in her great smithies, has nearly finished this job, and is ready to temper it in the soft brown earth. The fires are dying down; the hotel is built where terraces have overflowed into flat wastes of deposit; the pines have taken possession of the high ground whence the terraces first started. Only the actual curve of the cataract stands clear, and it is guarded by soldiers who patrol it with loaded six–shooters, in order that the tourist may not bring up fence–rails and sink them in a pool, or chip the fretted tracery of the formations with a geological hammer, or, walking where the crust is too thin, foolishly cook himself.

I manoeuvred round those soldiers. They were cavalry in a very slovenly uniform, dark–blue blouse, and light–blue trousers unstrapped, cut spoon–shape over the boot; cartridge belt, revolver, peaked cap, and worsted gloves—black buttons! By the mercy of Allah I opened conversation with a spectacled Scot. He had served the Queen in the Marines and a Line regiment, and the "go–fever" being in his bones, had drifted to America, there to serve Uncle Sam. We sat on the edge of an extinct little pool, that under happier circumstances would have grown into a geyser, and began to discuss things generally. To us appeared yet another soldier. No need to ask his nationality or to be told that the troop called him "The Henglishman." A cockney was he, who had seen something of warfare in Egypt, and had taken his discharge from a Fusilier regiment not unknown to you.

"And how do things go?"

"Very much as you please," said they. "There's not half the discipline here that there is in the Queen's service—not half—nor the work either, but what there is, is rough work. Why, there's a sergeant now with a black eye that one of our men gave him. They won't say anything about that, of course. Our punishments? Fines mostly, and then if you carry on too much you go to the cooler—that's the clink. Yes, Sir. Horses? Oh, they're devils, these Montanna horses. Bronchos mostly. We don't slick 'em up for parade—not much. And the amount of schooling that you put into one English troop–horse would be enough for a whole squadron of these creatures. You'll meet more troopers further up the Park. Go and look at their horses and their turnouts. I fancy it'll startle you. I'm wearing a made tie and a breastpin under my blouse? Of course I am! I can wear anything I

darn please. We aren't particular here. I shouldn't dare come on parade—no, nor yet fatigue duty—in this condition in the Old Country; but it don't matter here. But don't you forget, Sir, that it's taught me how to trust to myself, and my shooting irons. I don't want fifty orders to move me across the Park, and catch a poacher. Yes, they poach here. Men come in with an outfit and ponies, smuggle in a gun or two, and shoot the bison. If you interfere, they shoot at you. Then you confiscate all their outfit and their ponies. We have a pound full of them now down below. There's our Captain over yonder. Speak to him if you want to know anything special. This service isn't a patch on the Old Country's service; but you look, if it was worked up it would be just a Hell of a service. But these citizens despise us, and they put us on to road–mending, and such like. 'Nough to ruin any army."

To the Captain I addressed myself after my friends had gone. They told me that a good many American officers dressed by the French army. The Captain certainly might have been mistaken for a French officer of light cavalry, and he had more than the courtesy of a Frenchman. Yes, he had read a good deal about our Indian border warfare, and had been much struck with the likeness it bore to Red Indian warfare. I had better, when I reached the next cavalry post, scattered between two big geyser basins, introduce myself to a Captain and Lieutenant. They could show me things. He himself was devoting all his time to conserving the terraces, and surreptitiously running hot water into dried–up basins that fresh pools might form. "I get very interested in that sort of thing. It's not duty, but it's what I'm put here for." And then he began to talk of his troop as I have heard his brethren in India talk. Such a troop! Built up carefully, and watched lovingly; "not a man that I'd wish to exchange, and, what's more, I believe not a man that would wish to leave on his own account. We're different, I believe, from the English. Your officers value the horses; we set store on the men. We train them more than we do the horses."

Of the American trooper I will tell you more hereafter. He is not a gentleman to be trifled with.

Next dawning, entering a buggy of fragile construction, with the old people from Chicago, I embarked on my perilous career. We ran straight up a mountain till we could see, sixty miles away, the white houses of Cook City on another mountain, and the whiplash–like trail leading thereto. The live air made me drunk. If Tom, the driver, had proposed to send the mares in a bee–line to the city, I should have assented, and so would the old lady, who chewed gum and talked about her symptoms. The tub–ended rock–dog, which is but the translated prairie–dog, broke across the road under our horses' feet, the rabbit and the chipmunk danced with fright; we heard the roar of

the river, and the road went round a corner. On one side piled rock and shale, that enjoined silence for fear of a general slide–down; on the other a sheer drop, and a fool of a noisy river below. Then, apparently in the middle of the road, lest any should find driving too easy, a post of rock. Nothing beyond that save the flank of a cliff. Then my stomach departed from me, as it does when you swing, for we left the dirt, which was at least some guarantee of safety, and sailed out round the curve, and up a steep incline, on a plank–road built out from the cliff. The planks were nailed at the outer edge, and did not shift or creak very much—but enough, quite enough. That was the Golden Gate. I got my stomach back again when we trotted out on to a vast upland adorned with a lake and hills. Have you ever seen an untouched land—the face of virgin Nature? It is rather a curious sight, because the hills are choked with timber that has never known an axe, and the storm has rent a way through this timber, so that a hundred thousand trees lie matted together in swathes; and, since each tree lies where it falls, you may behold trunk and branch returning to the earth whence they sprang—exactly as the body of man returns—each limb making its own little grave, the grass climbing above the bark, till at last there remains only the outline of a tree upon the rank undergrowth.

Then we drove under a cliff of obsidian, which is black glass, some two hundred feet high; and the road at its foot was made of black glass that crackled. This was no great matter, because half an hour before Tom had pulled up in the woods that we might sufficiently admire a mountain who stood all by himself, shaking with laughter or rage.

The glass cliff overlooks a lake where the beavers built a dam about a mile and a half long in a zig–zag line, as their necessities prompted. Then came the Government and strictly preserved them, and, as you shall learn later on, they be damn impudent beasts. The old lady had hardly explained the natural history of beavers before we climbed some hills—it really didn't matter in that climate, because we could have scaled the stars—and (this mattered very much indeed) shot down a desperate, dusty slope, brakes shrieking on the wheels, the mares clicking among unseen rocks, the dust dense as a fog, and a wall of trees on either side. "How do the heavy four–horse coaches take it, Tom?" I asked, remembering that some twenty–three souls had gone that way half an hour before. "Take it at the run!" said Tom, spitting out the dust. Of course there was a sharp curve, and a bridge at the bottom, but luckily nothing met us, and we came to a wooden shanty called an hotel, in time for a crazy tiffin served by very gorgeous handmaids with very pink cheeks. When health fails in other and more exciting pursuits, a season as "help" in one of the

Yellowstone hotels will restore the frailest constitution.

Then by companies after tiffin we walked chattering to the uplands of Hell. They call it the Norris Geyser Basin on Earth. It was as though the tide of desolation had gone out, but would presently return, across innumerable acres of dazzling white geyser formation. There were no terraces here, but all other horrors. Not ten yards from the road a blast of steam shot up roaring every few seconds, a mud volcano spat filth to Heaven, streams of hot water rumbled under foot, plunged through the dead pines in steaming cataracts and died on a waste of white where green–grey, black–yellow, and pink pools roared, shouted, bubbled, or hissed as their wicked fancies prompted. By the look of the eye the place should have been frozen over. By the feel of the feet it was warm. I ventured out among the pools, carefully following tracks, but one unwary foot began to sink, a squirt of water followed, and having no desire to descend quick into Tophet I returned to the shore where the mud and the sulphur and the nameless fat ooze–vegetation of Lethe lay. But the very road rang as though built over a gulf; and besides, how was I to tell when the raving blast of steam would find its vent insufficient and blow the whole affair into Nirvana? There was a potent stench of stale eggs everywhere, and crystals of sulphur crumbled under the foot, and the glare of the sun on the white stuff was blinding. Sitting under a bank, to me appeared a young trooper—ex–Cape mounted Rifles, this man: the real American seems to object to his army—mounted on a horse half–maddened by the noise and steam and smell. He carried only the six–shooter and cartridge–belt. On service the Springfield carbine (which is clumsy) and a cartridge–belt slung diagonally complete equipment. The sword is no earthly use for Border warfare and, except at state parades, is never worn. The saddle is the McClellan tree over a four–folded blanket. Sweat–leathers you must pay for yourself. And the beauty of the tree is that it necessitates first very careful girthing and a thorough knowledge of tricks with the blanket to suit the varying conditions of the horse—a broncho will bloat in a night if he can get at a bellyful—and, secondly, even more careful riding to prevent galling. Crupper and breast–band do not seem to be used,—but they are casual about their accoutrements,—and the bit is the single, jaw–breaking curb which American war–pictures show us. That young man was very handsome, and the grey service hat—most like the under half of a seedy terai—shaded his strong face admirably as his horse backed and shivered and sidled and plunged all over the road, and he lectured from his saddle, one foot out of the heavy–hooded stirrup, one hand on the sweating neck. "He's not used to the Park, this brute, and he's a confirmed bolter on parade; but we understand each other." *Whoosh!* went the steam–blast down the road

with a dry roar. Round spun the troop horse prepared to bolt, and, his momentum being suddenly checked, reared till I thought he would fall back on his rider. "Oh no; we've settled that little matter when I was breaking him," said Centaur. "He used to try to fall back on me. Isn't he a devil? I think you'd laugh to see the way our regiments are horsed. Sometimes a big Montana beast like mine has a thirteen–two broncho pony for neighbour, and it's annoying if you're used to better things. And oh, how you have to ride your mount! It's necessary; but I can tell you at the end of a long day's march, when you'd give all the world to ride like a sack, it isn't sweet to get extra drill for slouching. When we're turned out, we're turned out for *anything*—not a fifteen–mile trot, but for the use and behoof of all the Northern States. I've been in Arizona. A trooper there who had been in India told me that Arizona was like Afghanistan. There's nothing under Heaven there except horned toads and rattlesnakes—and Indians. Our trouble is that we only deal with Indians and they don't teach us much, and of course the citizens look down on us and all that. As a matter of fact, I suppose we're really only mounted infantry, but remember we're the best mounted infantry in the world." And the horse danced a fandango in proof.

"My faith!" said I, looking at the dusty blouse, grey hat, soiled leather accoutrements, and whalebone poise of the wearer. "If they are all like you, you are."

"Thanks, whoever you may be. Of course if we were turned into a lawn–tennis court and told to resist, say, your heavy cavalry, we'd be ridden off the face of the earth if we couldn't get away. We have neither the weight nor the drill for a charge. My horse, for instance, by English standards, is half–broken, and like all the others, he bolts when we're in line. But cavalry charge against cavalry charge doesn't happen often, and if it did, well—all our men know that up to a hundred yards they are absolutely safe behind this old thing." He patted his revolver pouch. "Absolutely safe from any shooting of yours. What man do you think would dare to use a pistol at even thirty yards, if his life depended oh it? Not one of *your* men. They can't shoot. We can. You'll hear about that down the Park—further up."

Then he added, courteously: "Just now it seems that the English supply all the men to the American Army. That's what makes them so good perhaps." And with mutual expressions of good–will we parted—he to an outlying patrol fifteen miles away, I to my buggy and the old lady, who, regarding the horrors of the fire–holes, could only say, "Good Lord!" at thirty–second intervals. Her husband talked about "dreffel waste of steam–power," and we went on in the clear, crisp afternoon, speculating as to the formation of geysers.

"What I say," shrieked the old lady *apropos* of matters theological, "and what I say more, after having seen all that, is that the Lord has ordained a Hell for such as disbelieve his gracious works."

Nota bene.—Tom had profanely cursed the near mare for stumbling. He looked straight in front of him and said no word, but the left corner of his left eye flickered in my direction.

"And if," continued the old lady, "if we find a thing so dreffel as all that steam and sulphur allowed on the face of the earth, musn't we believe that there is something ten thousand times more terrible below prepared un*toe* our destruction?"

Some people have a wonderful knack of extracting comfort from things. I am ashamed to say I agreed ostentatiously with the old lady. She developed the personal view of the matter.

"*Now* I shall be able to say something to Anna Fincher about her way of living. Shan't I, Blake?" This to her husband.

"Yes," said he, speaking slowly after a heavy tiffin. "But the girl's a good girl;" and they fell to arguing as to whether the luckless Anna Fincher really stood in need of lectures edged with Hell fire (she went to dances I believe), while I got out and walked in the dust alongside of Tom.

"I drive blame cur'ous kinder folk through this place," said he. "Blame cur'ous. 'Seems a pity that they should ha' come so far just to liken Norris Basin to Hell. 'Guess Chicago would ha' served 'em, speaking in comparison, jest as good."

We curved the hill and entered a forest of spruce, the path serpentining between the tree–boles, the wheels running silent on immemorial mould. There was nothing alive in the forest save ourselves. Only a river was speaking angrily somewhere to the right. For miles we drove till Tom bade us alight and look at certain falls. Wherefore we stepped out of that forest and nearly fell down a cliff which guarded a tumbled river and returned demanding fresh miracles. If the water had run uphill, we should perhaps have taken more notice of it; but 'twas only a waterfall, and I really forget whether the water was warm or cold. There is a stream here called Firehole River. It is fed by the overflow from the various geysers and basins,—a warm and deadly river wherein no fish breed. I think we crossed it a few dozen times in the course of a day.

Then the sun began to sink, and there was a taste of frost about, and we went swiftly from the forest into the open, dashed across a branch of the Firehole River and found a wood shanty, even rougher than the last, at which, after a forty–mile drive, we were to dine and sleep. Half a mile from this place stood, on the banks of the Firehole River, a "beaver–lodge," and there were rumours of bears and other cheerful monsters in the woods on the hill at the back of the building.

In the cool, crisp quiet of the evening I sought that river, and found a pile of newly gnawed sticks and twigs. The beaver works with the cold–chisel, and a few clean strokes suffice to level a four–inch bole. Across the water on the far bank glimmered, with the ghastly white of peeled dead timber, the beaver–lodge—a mass of dishevelled branches. The inhabitants had dammed the stream lower down and spread it into a nice little lake. The question was would they come out for their walk before it got too dark to see. They came—blessings on their blunt muzzles, they came—as shadows come, drifting down the stream, stirring neither foot nor tail. There were three of them. One went down to investigate the state of the dam; the other two began to look for supper. There is only one thing more startling than the noiselessness of a tiger in the jungle, and that is the noiselessness of a beaver in the water. The straining ear could catch no sound whatever till they began to eat the thick green river–scudge that they call beaver–grass. I, bowed among the logs, held my breath and stared with all my eyes. They were not ten yards from me, and they would have eaten their dinner in peace so long as I had kept absolutely still. They were dear and desirable beasts, and I was just preparing to creep a step nearer when that wicked old lady from Chicago clattered down the bank, an umbrella in her hand, shrieking: "Beavers, beavers! Young man, whurr are those beavers? Good Lord! What was that now?"

The solitary watcher might have heard a pistol shot ring through the air. I wish it had killed the old lady, but it was only the beaver giving warning of danger with the slap of his tail on the water. It was exactly like the "phink" of a pistol fired with damp powder. Then there were no more beavers—not a whisker–end. The lodge, however, was there, and a beast lower than any beaver began to throw stones at it because the old lady from Chicago said: "P'raps, if you rattle them up they'll come out. I do so want to see a beaver."

Yet it cheers me to think I have seen the beaver in his wilds. Never will I go to the Zoo. That even, after supper—'twere flattery to call it dinner—a Captain and a Subaltern of the cavalry post appeared at the hotel. These were the officers of whom the Mammoth Springs Captain had spoken. The Lieutenant had read everything that he could lay hands on about the Indian army, especially our cavalry arrangements, and was very full of a scheme for raising the riding Red Indians—it is not every noble savage that will make a trooper—into frontier levies—a sort of Khyber guard. "Only," as he said ruefully, "there is no frontier these days, and all our Indian wars are nearly over. Those beautiful beasts will die out, and nobody will ever know what splendid cavalry they can make."

The Captain told stories of Border warfare—of ambush, firing on

the rear–guard, heat that split the skull better than any tomahawk, cold that wrinkled the very liver, night–stampedes of baggage–mules, raiding of cattle, and hopeless stern–chases into inhospitable hills, when the cavalry knew that they were not only being outpaced but outspied. Then he spoke of one fair charge when a tribe gave battle in the open and the troopers rode in swordless, firing right and left with their revolvers and—it was excessively uncomfy for that tribe. And I spoke of what men had told me of huntings in Burma, of hill–climbing in the Black Mountain affair, and so forth.

"Exactly!" said the Captain. "Nobody knows and nobody cares. What does it matter to the Down–Easter who Wrap–up–his–Tail was?"

"And what does the fat Briton know or care about Boh Hla–Oo?" said I. Then both together: "Depend upon it, my dear Sir, the army in both Anglo–Saxon countries is a mischievously underestimated institution, and it's a pleasure to meet a man who," etc., etc. And we nodded triangularly in all good will, and swore eternal friendship. The Lieutenant made a statement which rather amazed me. He said that, on account of the scarcity of business, many American officers were to be found getting practical instruction from little troubles among the South American Republics. When the need broke out they would return. "There is so little for us to do, and the Republic has a trick of making us hedge and ditch for our pay. A little road–making on service is not a bad thing, but continuous navvying is enough to knock the heart out of any army."

I agreed, and we sat up till two in the morning swapping the lies of East and West. As that glorious chief Man–afraid–of–Pink–Rats once said to the Agent on the Reservation: "'Melican officer good man. Heap good man. Drink me. Drink he. Drink me. Drink he. Drink *he*. Me blind. *Heap* good man!"

No. XXXI

Ends With the cañon of the Yellowstone. the Maiden From New Hampshire--larry--"wrap-up-his-tail"--tom--the Old Lady From Chicago--and a Few Natural Phenomena--including One Briton - "What Man Would Read and Read the Selfsame Faces and Like the Marbles Which the Windmill Grinds, Rub Smooth Forever With the Same Smooth Minds, This Year Retracing Last Year's Every Year's Dull Traces, When There Are Woods and Unmanstifled Places?" -- lowell.

Once upon a time there was a carter who brought his team and a friend into the Yellowstone Park without due thought. Presently they came upon a few of the natural beauties of the place, and that carter turned his team into his friend's team howling: "Get back o' this, Jim. All Hell's alight under our noses." And they call the place Hell's Half–acre to this day. We, too, the old lady from Chicago, her husband, Tom, and the good little mares came to Hell's Half–acre, which is about sixty acres, and when Tom said: "Would you like to drive over it?" we said: "Certainly no, and if you do, we shall report you to the authorities." There was a plain, blistered and peeled and abominable, and it was given over to the sportings and spoutings of devils who threw mud and steam and dirt at each other with whoops and halloos and bellowing curses. The place smelt of the refuse of the Pit, and that odour mixed with the clean, wholesome aroma of the pines in our nostrils throughout the day. Be it known that the Park is laid out, like Ollendorf, in exercises of progressive difficulty. Hell's Half–acre was a prelude to ten or twelve miles of geyser formation. We passed hot streams boiling in the forest; saw whiffs of steam beyond these, and yet other whiffs breaking through the misty green hills in the far distance; we trampled on sulphur, and sniffed things much worse than any sulphur which is known to the upper world; and so came upon a park–like place where Tom suggested we should get out and play with the geysers.

Imagine mighty green fields splattered with lime beds: all the flowers of the summer growing up to the very edge of the lime. That was the first glimpse of the geyser basins. The buggy had pulled up close to a rough, broken, blistered cone of stuff between ten and twenty feet high. There was trouble in that place—moaning, splashing, gurgling, and the clank of machinery. A spurt of boiling water jumped into the air and a wash of water followed. I removed swiftly. The old lady from Chicago shrieked. "What a wicked waste!" said her husband. I think they call it the Riverside Geyser. Its spout was torn and ragged like the mouth of a gun when a shell has burst

there. It grumbled madly for a moment or two and then was still. I crept over the steaming lime—it was the burning marl on which Satan lay—and looked fearfully down its mouth. You should never look a gift geyser in the mouth. I beheld a horrible slippery slimy funnel with water rising and falling ten feet at a time. Then the water rose to lip level with a rush and an infernal bubbling troubled this Devil's Bethesda before the sullen heave of the crest of a wave lapped over the edge and made me run. Mark the nature, of the human soul! I had begun with awe, not to say terror. I stepped back from the flanks of the Riverside Geyser saying: "Pooh! Is that all it can do?" Yet for aught I knew the whole thing might have blown up at a minute's notice; she, he, or it being an arrangement of uncertain temper.

We drifted on up that miraculous valley. On either side of us were hills from a thousand to fifteen hundred feet high and wooded from heel to crest. As far as the eye could range forward were columns of steam in the air, misshapen lumps of lime, most like preadamite monsters, still pools of turquoise blue, stretches of blue cornflowers, a river that coiled on itself twenty times, boulders of strange colours, and ridges of glaring, staring white.

The old lady from Chicago poked with her parasol at the pools as though they had been alive. On one particularly innocent–looking little puddle she turned her back for a moment, and there rose behind her a twenty–foot column of water and steam. Then she shrieked and protested that "she never thought it would ha' done it," and the old man chewed his tobacco steadily, and mourned for steam power wasted. I embraced the whitened stump of a middle–sized pine that had grown all too close to a hot pool's lip, and the whole thing turned over under my hand as a tree would do in a nightmare. From right and left came the trumpetings of elephants at play. I stepped into a pool of old dried blood rimmed with the nodding cornflowers; the blood changed to ink even as I trod; and ink and blood were washed away in a spurt of boiling sulphurous water spat out from the lee of a bank of flowers. This sounds mad, doesn't it?

A moonfaced trooper of German extraction—never was Park so carefully patrolled—came up to inform us that as yet we had not seen any of the real geysers, that they were all a mile or so up the valley, tastefully scattered round the hotel in which we would rest for the night. America is a free country, but the citizens look down on the soldier. *I* had to entertain that trooper. The old lady from Chicago would have none of him; so we loafed along together, now across half–rotten pine logs sunk in swampy ground, anon over the ringing geyser formation, then knee–deep through long grass.

"And why did you 'list?" said I.

The moonfaced one's face began to work. I thought he would

have a fit, but he told me a story instead—such a nice tale of a naughty little girl who wrote love letters to two men at once. She was a simple village wife, but a wicked "Family Novelette" countess couldn't have accomplished her ends better. She drove one man nearly wild with her pretty little treachery; and the other man abandoned her and came West to forget. Moonface was that man.

We rounded a low spur of hill, and came out upon a field of aching snowy lime, rolled in sheets, twisted into knots, riven with rents and diamonds and stars, stretching for more than half a mile in every direction. In this place of despair lay most of the big geysers who know when there is trouble in Krakatoa, who tell the pines when there is a cyclone on the Atlantic seaboard, and who—are exhibited to visitors under pretty and fanciful names. The first mound that I encountered belonged to a goblin splashing in his tub. I heard him kick, pull a shower–bath on his shoulders, gasp, crack his joints, and rub himself down with a towel; then he let the water out of the bath, as a thoughtful man should, and it all sank down out of sight till another goblin arrived. Yet they called this place the Lioness and the Cubs. It lies not very far from the Lion, which is a sullen, roaring beast, and they say that when it is very active the other geysers presently follow suit. After the Krakatoa eruption all the geysers went mad together, spouting, spurting, and bellowing till men feared that they would rip up the whole field. Mysterious sympathies exist among them, and when the Giantess speaks (of her more anon) they all hold their peace.

I was watching a solitary spring, when, far across the fields, stood up a plume of spun glass, iridescent and superb, against the sky. "That," said the trooper, "is Old Faithful. He goes off every sixty–five minutes to the minute, plays for five minutes, and sends up a column of water a hundred and fifty feet high. By the time you have looked at all the other geysers he will be ready to play."

So we looked and we wondered at the Beehive, whose mouth is built up exactly like a hive; at the Turban (which is not in the least like a turban); and at many, many other geysers, hot holes, and springs. Some of them rumbled, some hissed, some went off spasmodically, and others lay still in sheets of sapphire and beryl.

Would you believe that even these terrible creatures have to be guarded by the troopers to prevent the irreverent American from chipping the cones to pieces, or worse still, making the geysers sick? If you take of soft–soap a small barrelful and drop it down a geyser's mouth, that geyser will presently be forced to lay all before you and for days afterwards will be of an irritated and inconsistent stomach. When they told me the tale I was filled with sympathy. Now I wish that I had stolen soap and tried the experiment on some lonely little

beast of a geyser in the woods. It sounds so probable—and so human.

Yet he would be a bold man who would administer emetics to the Giantess. She is flat–lipped, having no mouth, she looks like a pool, fifty feet long and thirty wide, and there is no ornamentation about her. At irregular intervals she speaks, and sends up a column of water over two hundred feet high to begin with; then she is angry for a day and a half—sometimes for two days. Owing to her peculiarity of going mad in the night not many people have seen the Giantess at her finest; but the clamour of her unrest, men say, shakes the wooden hotel, and echoes like thunder among the hills. When I saw her trouble was brewing. The pool bubbled seriously, and at five–minute intervals, sank a foot or two, then rose, washed over the rim, and huge steam bubbles broke on the top. Just before an eruption the water entirely disappears from view. Whenever you see the water die down in a geyser–mouth get away as fast as you can. I saw a tiny little geyser suck in its breath in this way, and instinct made me retire while it hooted after me.

Leaving the Giantess to swear, and spit, and thresh about, we went over to Old Faithful, who by reason of his faithfulness has benches close to him whence you may comfortably watch. At the appointed hour we heard the water flying up and down the mouth with the sob of waves in a cave. Then came the preliminary gouts, then a roar and a rush, and that glittering column of diamonds rose, quivered, stood still for a minute. Then it broke, and the rest was a confused snarl of water not thirty feet high. All the young ladies—not more than twenty—in the tourist band remarked that it was "elegant," and betook themselves to writing their names in the bottoms of shallow pools. Nature fixes the insult indelibly, and the after–years will learn that "Hattie," "Sadie," "Mamie," "Sophie," and so forth, have taken out their hair–pins, and scrawled on the face of Old Faithful.

The congregation returned to the hotel to put down their impressions in diaries and note–books which they wrote up ostentatiously in the verandahs. It was a sweltering hot day, albeit we stood somewhat higher than the summit of Jakko, and I left that raw pine–creaking caravanserai for the cool shade of a clump of pines between whose trunks glimmered tents. A batch of troopers came down the road, and flung themselves across country into their rough lines. Verily the 'Melican cavalry–man *can* ride, though he keeps his accoutrements pig, and his horse cow–fashion.

I was free of that camp in five minutes—free to play with the heavy lumpy carbines, to have the saddles stripped, and punch the horses knowingly in the ribs. One of the men had been in the fight with "Wrap–up–his–Tail" before alluded to, and he told me how that great chief, his horse's tail tied up in red calico, swaggered in front of

the United States cavalry, challenging all to single combat. But he was slain, and a few of his tribe with him. "There's no use in an Indian, anyway," concluded my friend.

A couple of cowboys—real cowboys, not the Buffalo Bill article—jingled through the camp amid a shower of mild chaff. They were on their way to Cook City, I fancy, and I know that they never washed. But they were picturesque ruffians with long spurs, hooded stirrups, slouch hats, fur weather–cloths over their knees, and pistol–butts easy to hand.

"The cowboy's goin' under before long," said my friend. "Soon as the country's settled up he'll have to go. But he's mighty useful now. What should we do without the cowboy?"

"As how?" said I, and the camp laughed.

"He has the money. We have the know–how. He comes in in winter to play poker at the military posts. *We* play poker—a few. When he's lost his money we make him drunk and let him go. Sometimes we get the wrong man." And he told a tale of an innocent cowboy who turned up, cleaned out, at a post, and played poker for thirty–six hours. But it was the post that was cleaned out when that long–haired Caucasian Ah Sin removed himself, heavy with everybody's pay, and declining the proffered liquor. "Naow," said the historian, "I don't play with no cowboy unless he's a little bit drunk first."

Ere I departed I gathered from more than one man that significant fact that *up to one hundred yards* he felt absolutely secure behind his revolver.

"In England, I understand," quoth a limber youth from the South, "in England a man aren't allowed to play with no firearms. He's got to be taught all that when he enlists. I didn't want much teaching how to shoot straight 'fore I served Uncle Sam. And that's just where it is. But you was talking about your horse guards now?"

I explained briefly some peculiarities of equipment connected with our crackest crack cavalry. I grieve to say the camp roared.

"Take 'em over swampy ground. Let 'em run around a bit an' work the starch out of 'em, an' then, Almighty, if we wouldn't plug 'em at ease I'd eat their horses!"

"But suppose they engaged in the open?" said I.

"Engage the Hades. Not if there was a tree–trunk within twenty miles they *couldn't* engage in the open!"

Gentlemen, the officers, have you ever seriously considered the existence on earth of a cavalry who by preference would fight in timber? The evident sincerity of the proposition made me think hard as I moved over to the hotel and joined a party exploration, which, diving into the woods, unearthed a pit pool of burningest water

fringed with jet black sand—all the ground near by being pure white. But miracles pall when they arrive at the rate of twenty a day. A flaming dragonfly flew over the pool, reeled and dropped on the water, dying without a quiver of his gorgeous wings, and the pool said nothing whatever, but sent its thin steam wreaths up to the burning sky. I prefer pools that talk.

There was a maiden—a very trim maiden—who had just stepped out of one of Mr. James's novels. She owned a delightful mother and an equally delightful father, a heavy–eyed, slow–voiced man of finance. The parents thought that their daughter wanted change. She lived in New Hampshire. Accordingly, she had dragged them up to Alaska, to the Yosemite Valley, and was now returning leisurely *via* the Yellowstone just in time for the tail–end of the summer season at Saratoga. We had met once or twice before in the Park, and I had been amazed and amused at her critical commendation of the wonders that she saw. From that very resolute little mouth I received a lecture on American literature, the nature and inwardness of Washington society, the precise value of Cable's works as compared with "Uncle Remus" Harris, and a few other things that had nothing whatever to do with geysers, but were altogether delightful. Now an English maiden who had stumbled on a dust–grimed, lime–washed, sun–peeled, collarless wanderer come from and going to goodness knows where, would, her mother inciting her and her father brandishing his umbrella, have regarded him as a dissolute adventurer. Not so those delightful people from New Hampshire. They were good enough to treat me—it sounds almost incredible—as a human being, possibly respectable, probably not in immediate need of financial assistance. Papa talked pleasantly and to the point. The little maiden strove valiantly with the accent of her birth and that of her reading, and mamma smiled benignly in the background.

Balance this with a story of a young English idiot I met knocking about inside his high collars, attended by a valet. He condescended to tell me that "you can't be too careful who you talk to in these parts," and stalked on, fearing, I suppose, every minute for his social chastity. Now that man was a barbarian (I took occasion to tell him so), for he comported himself after the manner of the head–hunters of Assam, who are at perpetual feud one with another.

You will understand that these foolish tales are introduced in order to cover the fact that this pen cannot describe the glories of the Upper Geyser basin. The evening I spent under the lee of the Castle Geyser sitting on a log with some troopers and watching a baronial keep forty feet high spouting hot water. If the Castle went off first, they said the Giantess would be quiet, and *vice versa*; and then they told tales till the moon got up and a party of campers in the woods

gave us all something to eat.

Next morning Tom drove us on, promising new wonders. He pulled up after a few miles at a clump of brushwood where an army was drowning. I could hear the sick gasps and thumps of the men going under, but when I broke through the brushwood the hosts had fled, and there were only pools of pink, black, and white lime, thick as turbid honey. They shot up a pat of mud every minute or two, choking in the effort. It was an uncanny sight. Do you wonder that in the old days the Indians were careful to avoid the Yellowstone? Geysers are permissible, but mud is terrifying. The old lady from Chicago took a piece of it, and in half an hour it died into lime–dust and blew away between her fingers. All *maya*,—illusion,—you see! Then we clinked over sulphur in crystals; there was a waterfall of boiling water; and a road across a level park hotly contested by the beavers. Every winter they build their dam and flood the low–lying land; every summer that dam is torn up by the Government, and for half a mile you must plough axle–deep in water, the willows brushing into the buggy, and little waterways branching off right and left. The road is the main stream—just like the Bolan line in flood. If you turn up a byway, there is no more of you, and the beavers work your buggy into next year's dam.

Then came soft, turfy forest that deadened the wheels, and two troopers—on detachment duty—came noiselessly behind us. One was the Wrap–up–his–Tail man, and we talked merrily while the half–broken horses bucked about among the trees till we came to a mighty hill all strewn with moss agates, and everybody had to get out and pant in that thin air. But how intoxicating it was! The old lady from Chicago clucked like an emancipated hen as she scuttled about the road cramming pieces of rock into her reticule. She sent me fifty yards down the hill to pick up a piece of broken bottle which she insisted was moss agate! "I've some o' that at home an' they shine. You go get it, young feller."

As we climbed the long path, the road grew viler and viler till it became without disguise the bed of a torrent; and just when things were at their rockiest we emerged into a little sapphire lake—but never sapphire was so blue—called Mary's Lake; and that between eight and nine thousand feet above the sea. Then came grass downs, all on a vehement slope, so that the buggy following the new–made road ran on to the two off–wheels mostly, till we dipped head–first into a ford, climbed up a cliff, raced along a down, dipped again and pulled up dishevelled at "Larry's" for lunch and an hour's rest. Only "Larry" could have managed that school–feast tent on the lonely hillside. Need I say that he was an Irishman? His supplies were at their lowest ebb, but Larry enveloped us all in the golden glamour of

his speech ere we had descended, and the tent with the rude trestle–table became a palace, the rough fare, delicacies of Delmonico, and we, the abashed recipients of Larry's imperial bounty. It was only later that I discovered I had paid eight shillings for tinned beef, biscuits, and beer, but on the other hand Larry had said: "Will I go out an' kill a buffalo?" And I felt that for me and for me alone would he have done it. Everybody else felt that way. Good luck go with Larry!

"An' now you'll all go an' wash your pocket–handkerchiefs in that beautiful hot spring round the corner," said he. "There's soap an' a washboard ready, an' 'tis not every day that ye can get hot water for nothing." He waved us large–handedly to the open downs while he put the tent to rights. These was no sense of fatigue on the body or distance in the air. Hill and dale rode on the eyeball. I could have clutched the far–off snowy peaks by putting out my hand. Never was such maddening air. Why we should have washed pocket–handkerchiefs Larry alone knows. It appeared to be a sort of religious rite. In a little valley overhung with gay painted rocks ran a stream of velvet brown and pink. It was hot—hotter than the hand could bear—and it coloured the boulders in its course.

There was the maiden from New Hampshire, the old lady from Chicago, papa, mamma, the woman who chewed gum, and all the rest of them, gravely bending over a washboard and soap. Mysterious virtues lay in that queer stream. It turned the linen white as driven snow in five minutes, and then we lay on the grass and laughed with sheer bliss of being alive. This have I known once in Japan, once on the banks of the Columbia, what time the salmon came in and "California" howled, and once again in the Yellowstone by the light of the eyes of the maiden from New Hampshire. Four little pools lay at my elbow: one was of black water (tepid), one clear water (cold), one clear water (hot), one red water (boiling); my newly washed handkerchief covered them all. We marvelled as children marvel.

"This evening we shall do the grand cañon of the Yellowstone?" said the maiden.

"Together?" said I; and she said yes.

The sun was sinking when we heard the roar of falling waters and came to a broad river along whose banks we ran. And then—oh, then! I might at a pinch describe the infernal regions, but not the other place. Be it known to you that the Yellowstone River has occasion to run through a gorge about eight miles long. To get to the bottom of the gorge it makes two leaps, one of about one hundred and twenty and the other of three hundred feet. I investigated the upper or lesser fall, which is close to the hotel. Up to that time nothing particular happens to the Yellowstone, its banks being only rocky, rather steep, and plentifully adorned with pines. At the falls it comes round a

corner, green, solid, ribbed with a little foam and not more than thirty yards wide. Then it goes over still green and rather more solid than before. After a minute or two you, sitting upon a rock directly above the drop, begin to understand that something has occurred; that the river has jumped a huge distance between solid cliff walls and what looks like the gentle froth of ripples lapping the sides of the gorge below is really the outcome of great waves. And the river yells aloud; but the cliffs do not allow the yells to escape.

That inspection began with curiosity and finished in terror, for it seemed that the whole world was sliding in chrysolite from under my feet. I followed with the others round the corner to arrive at the brink of the cañon: we had to climb up a nearly perpendicular ascent to begin with, for the ground rises more than the river drops. Stately pine woods fringe either lip of the gorge, which is—the Gorge of the Yellowstone.

All I can say is that without warning or preparation I looked into a gulf seventeen hundred feet deep with eagles and fish–hawks circling far below. And the sides of that gulf were one wild welter of colour—crimson, emerald, cobalt, ochre, amber, honey splashed with port–wine, snow–white, vermilion, lemon, and silver–grey, in wide washes. The sides did not fall sheer, but were graven by time and water and air into monstrous heads of kings, dead chiefs, men and women of the old time. So far below that no sound of its strife could reach us, the Yellowstone River ran—a finger–wide strip of jade–green. The sunlight took those wondrous walls and gave fresh hues to those that nature had already laid there. Once I saw the dawn break over a lake in Rajputana and the sun set over the Oodey Sagar amid a circle of Holman Hunt hills. This time I was watching both performances going on below me—upside down you understand—and the colours were real! The cañon was burning like Troy town; but it would burn for ever, and, thank goodness, neither pen nor brush could ever portray its splendours adequately. The Academy would reject the picture for a chromolithograph. The public would scoff at the letter–press for *Daily Telegraphese*. "I will leave this thing alone," said I; "'tis my peculiar property. Nobody else shall share it with me." Evening crept through the pines that shadowed us, but the full glory of the day flamed in that cañon as we went out very cautiously to a jutting piece of rock—blood–red or pink it was—that overhung the deepest deeps of all. Now I know what it is to sit enthroned amid the clouds of sunset. Giddiness took away all sensation of touch or form; but the sense of blinding colour remained. When I reached the mainland again I had sworn that I had been floating. The maid from New Hampshire said no word for a very long time. She then quoted poetry, which was perhaps the best thing she could have done.

"And to think that this show–place has been going on all these days an' none of we ever saw it," said the old lady from Chicago, with an acid glance at her husband.

"No, only the Injuns," said he, unmoved; and the maiden and I laughed long. Inspiration is fleeting, beauty is vain, and the power of the mind for wonder limited. Though the shining hosts themselves had risen choiring from the bottom of the gorge they would not have prevented her papa and one baser than himself from rolling stones down those stupendous rainbow–washed slides. Seventeen hundred feet of steepest pitch and rather more than seventeen hundred colours for log or boulder to whirl through! So we heaved things and saw them gather way and bound from white rock to red or yellow, dragging behind them torrents of colour, till the noise of their descent ceased and they bounded a hundred yards clear at the last into the Yellowstone.

"I've been down there," said Tom that evening. "It's easy to get down if you're careful—just sit and slide; but getting up is worse. An' I found, down below there, two rocks just marked with a picture of the cañon. I wouldn't sell those rocks not for fifteen dollars."

And papa and I crawled down to the Yellowstone—just above the first little fall—to wet a line for good luck. The round moon came up and turned the cliffs and pines into silver; a two–pound trout came up also, and we slew him among the rocks, nearly tumbling into that wild river.

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Then out and away to Livingstone once more. The maiden from New Hampshire disappeared; papa and mamma with her disappeared. Disappeared, too, the old lady from Chicago and all the rest, while I thought of all that I had *not* seen—the forest of petrified trees with amethyst crystals in their black hearts; the great Yellowstone Lake where you catch your trout alive in one spring and drop him into another to boil him; and most of all of that mysterious Hoodoo region where all the devils not employed in the geysers live and kill the wandering bear and elk, so that the scared hunter finds in Death Gulch piled carcasses of the dead whom no man has smitten. Hoodoo–land with the overhead noises, the bird and beast and devil–rocks, the mazes and the bottomless pits,—all these things I missed. On the return road Yankee Jim and Diana of the Crossways gave me kindly greeting as the train paused an instant before their door, and at Livingstone whom should I see but Tom the driver?

"I've done with the Yellowstone and decided to clear out East

somewheres," said he. "Your talkin' about movin' round so gay an' careless made me kinder restless; I'm movin' out."

Lord forgie us for our responsibility one to another!

"And your partner?" said I.

"Here's him," said Tom, introducing a gawky youth with a bundle; and I saw those two young men turn their faces to the East.

No. XXXII

Of the American Army and the City of the Saints. the Temple, the Book of Mormon, and the Girl From Dorset. an Oriental Consideration of Polygamy - "A Fool Also is Full of Words: A Man Cannot Tell What Shall be; and What Shall be After Him Who Can Tell?"

It has just occurred to me with great force that delightful as these letters are to myself their length and breadth and depth may be just the least little bit in the world wearisome to you over there. I will compress myself rigorously, though I should very much like to deliver a dissertation on the American Army and the possibilities of its extension.

The American army is a beautiful little army. Some day, when all the Indians are happily dead or drunk, it ought to make the finest scientific and survey corps that the world has ever seen. It does excellent work now, but there is this defect in its nature: it is officered, as you know, from West Point, but the mischief of it is that West Point seems to be created for the purpose of spreading a general knowledge of military matters among the people. A boy goes up to that institution, gets his pass, and returns to civil life, so they tell me, with a dangerous knowledge that he is a sucking Moltke, and may apply his learning when occasion offers. Given trouble, that man will be a nuisance, because he is a hideously versatile American to begin with, as cocksure of himself as a man can be, and with all the racial disregard for human life to back him through his demi–semi–professional generalship. In a country where, as the records of the daily papers show, men engaged in a conflict with police or jails are all too ready to adopt a military formation, and get heavily shot in a sort of cheap, half–instructed warfare instead of being decently scared by the appearance of the military, this sort of arrangement does not seem wise. The bond between the States is of amazing tenuity. So long as they do not absolutely march into the District of Columbia, sit on the Washington statues, and invent a flag of their own, they can legislate, lynch, hunt negroes through swamps, divorce, railroad, and rampage as much as ever they choose. They do not need knowledge of their own military strength to back their genial lawlessness. That Regular Army, which is a dear little army, should be kept to itself, blooded on detachment duty, turned into the paths of science, and now and again assembled at feasts of Freemasons and so forth. It's too tiny to be a political power. The immortal wreck of the Grand Army of the Republic is a political power of the largest and most unblushing description. It ought not to help to lay the foundations of an amateur

military power that is blind and irresponsible….

Be thankful that the balance of this lecture is suppressed, and with it the account of a "shiveree" which I attended in Livingstone City: and the story of the editor and the sub–editor (the latter was a pet cougar, or mountain lion, who used, they said, skilfully to sub–edit disputants in the office) of the Livingstone daily paper.

Omitting a thousand matters of first importance, let me pick up the thread of things on a narrow–gauge line that took me down to Salt Lake. The run between Delhi and Ahmedabad on a May day would have been bliss compared to this torture. There was nothing but glare and desert and alkali dust. There was no smoking–accommodation. I sat in the lavatory with the conductor and a prospector who told stories about Indian atrocities in the voice of a dreaming child—oath following oath as smoothly as clotted cream laps the mouth of the jug. I don't think he knew he was saying anything out of the way, but nine or ten of those oaths were new to me, and one even made the conductor raise his eyebrows.

"And when a man's alone mostly, leadin' his horse across the hills, he gets to talk aloud to himself as it was," said the weather–worn retailer of tortures. A vision rose before me of this man trampling the Bannack City trail under the stars—swearing, always swearing!

Bundles of rags that were pointed out as Red Indians, boarded the train from time to time. Their race privileges allow them free transit on the platforms of the cars. They mustn't come inside of course, and equally of course the train never thinks of pulling up for them. I saw a squaw take us flying and leave us in the same manner when we were spinning round a curve. Like the Punjabi, the Red Indian gets out by preference on the trackless plain and walks stolidly to the horizon. He never says where he is going….

Salt Lake. I am concerned for the sake of Mr. Phil Robinson, his soul. You will remember that he wrote a book called *Saints and Sinners* in which he proved very prettily that the Mormon was almost altogether an estimable person. Ever since my arrival at Salt Lake I have been wondering what made him write that book. On mature reflection, and after a long walk round the city, I am inclined to think it was the sun, which is very powerful hereabouts.

By great good luck the evil–minded train, already delayed twelve hours by a burnt bridge, brought me to the city on a Saturday by way of that valley which the Mormons aver their efforts had caused to blossom like the rose. Some hours previously I had entered a new world where, in conversation, every one was either a Mormon or a Gentile. It is not seemly for a free and independent citizen to dub himself a Gentile, but the Mayor of Ogden—which is the Gentile city of the valley—told me that there must be some distinction between

the two flocks. Long before the fruit orchards of Logan or the shining levels of the Salt Lake had been reached that Mayor—himself a Gentile, and one renowned for his dealings with the Mormons—told me that the great question of the existence of the power within the power was being gradually solved by the ballot and by education. "We have," quoth he, "hills round and about here, stuffed full of silver and gold and lead, and all Hell atop of the Mormon church can't keep the Gentile from flocking in when that's the case. At Ogden, thirty miles from Salt Lake, this year the Gentile vote swamped the Mormon at the Municipal elections, and next year we trust that we shall be able to repeat our success in Salt Lake itself. In that city the Gentiles are only one–third of the total population, but the mass of 'em are grown men, capable of voting. Whereas the Mormons are cluttered up with children. I guess as soon as we have purely Gentile officers in the township, and the control of the policy of the city, the Mormons will have to back down considerable. They're bound to go before long. My own notion is that it's the older men who keep alive the opposition to the Gentile and all his works. The younger ones, spite of all the elders tell 'em, *will* mix with the Gentile, and read Gentile books, and you bet your sweet life there's a holy influence working toward conversion in the kiss of an average Gentile—specially when the girl knows that he won't think it necessary for her salvation to load the house up with other woman–folk. I guess the younger generation are giving sore trouble to the elders. What's that you say about polygamy? It's a penal offence now under a Bill passed not long ago. The Mormon has to elect one wife and keep to her. If he's caught visiting any of the others —do you see that cool and restful brown stone building way over there against the hillside? That's the penitentiary. He is sent there to consider his sins, and he pays a fine, too. But most of the police in Salt Lake are Mormons, and I don't suppose they are too hard on their friends. I presoom there's a good deal of polygamy practised on the sly. But the chief trouble is to get the Mormon to see that the Gentile isn't the doubly–damned beast that the elders represent. Only get the Gentiles well into the State, and the whole concern is bound to go to pieces in a very little time."

And the wish being father to the thought, "Why, certainly," said I, and began to take in the valley of Deseret, the home of the latter–day saints, and the abode perhaps of as much misery as has ever been compressed into forty years. The good folk at home will not understand, but you will, what follows. You know how in Bengal to this day the child–wife is taught to curse her possible co–wife, ere yet she has gone to her husband's house? And the Bengali woman has been accustomed to polygamy for a few hundred years. You know, too, the awful jealousy between mother wife and barren behind the

purdah—the jealousy that culminates sometimes in the poisoning of the well–beloved son? Now and again, an Englishwoman employs a high–caste Mussulman nurse, and in the offices of that hire women are apt to forget the differences of colour, and to speak unreservedly as twin daughters under Eve's curse. The nurse tells very strange and awful things. She has, and this the Mormons count a privilege, been born into polygamy; but she loathes and detests it from the bottom of her jealous soul. And to the lot of the Bengali co–wife—"the cursed of the cursed—the daughter of the dunghill—the scald–head and the barren–mute" (you know the rest of that sweet commination–service) —one creed, of all the White creeds to–day, deliberately introduces the white woman taken from centuries of training, which have taught her that it is right to control the undivided heart of one man. To quench her most natural rebellion, that amazing creed and fantastic jumble of Mahometanism, the Mosaical law, and imperfectly comprehended fragments of Freemasonry, calls to its aid all the powers of a hell conceived and elaborated by coarse–minded hedgers and ditchers. A sweet view, isn't it?

All the beauty of the valley could not make me forget it. But the valley is very fair. Bench after bench of land, flat as a table against the flanks of the ringing hills, marks where the Salt Lake rested for a while as it sunk from an inland sea to a lake fifty miles long and thirty broad. Before long the benches will be covered with houses. At present these are hidden among the green trees on the dead flat of the valley. You have read a hundred times how the streets of Salt Lake City are very broad, furnished with rows of shade trees and gutters of fresh water. This is true, but I struck the town in a season of great drouth—that same drouth which is playing havoc with the herds of Montana. The trees were limp, and the rills of sparkling water that one reads about were represented by dusty, paved courses. Main Street appears to be inhabited by the commercial Gentile, who has made of it a busy, bustling thoroughfare, and, in the eye of the sun, swigs the ungodly lager and smokes the improper cigar all day long. For which I like him. At the head of Main Street stand the lions of the place; the Temple and the Tabernacle, the Tithing House, and the houses of Brigham Young, whose portrait is on sale in most of the booksellers' shops. Incidentally it may be mentioned that the late Amir of Utah does not unremotely resemble His Highness the Amir of Afghanistan, whom these fortunate eyes have seen. And I have no desire to fall into the hands of the Amir. The first thing to be seen was, of course, the Temple, the outward exponent of a creed. Armed with a copy of the Book of Mormon, for better comprehension, I went to form rash opinions. Some day the Temple will be finished. It was begun only thirty years ago, and up to date rather more than three

million dollars and a half have been expended in its granite bulk. The walls are ten feet thick; the edifice itself is about a hundred feet high; and its towers will be nearly two hundred. And that is all there is of it, unless you choose to inspect more closely; always reading the Book of Mormon as you walk. Then the wondrous puerility, of what I suppose we must call the design, becomes apparent. These men, directly inspired from on High, heaped stone on stone and pillar on pillar, without achieving either dignity, relief, or interest. There is, over the main door, some pitiful scratching in stone representing the all–seeing eye, the Masonic Grip, the sun, moon, and stars, and, perhaps, other skittles. The flatness and meanness of the thing almost makes you weep when you look at the magnificent granite in blocks strewn abroad, and think of the art that three million dollars might have called in to the aid of the church. It is as though a child had said: "Let us draw a great, big, fine house—finer than any house that ever was,"—and in that desire had laboriously smudged along with a ruler and pencil, piling meaningless straight lines on compass–drawn curves, with his tongue following every movement of the inept hand. Then sat I down on a wheelbarrow and read the Book of Mormon, and behold the spirit of the book was the spirit of the stone before me. The estimable Joseph and Hyrum Smith struggling to create a new Bible, when they knew nothing of the history of Old and New Testament, and the inspired architect muddling with his bricks—they were brothers. But the book was more interesting than the building. It is written, and all the world has read, how to Joseph Smith an angel came down from Heaven with a pair of celestial gig–lamps, whereby he was marvellously enabled to interpret certain plates of gold scribbled over with dots and scratches, and discovered by him in the ground. Which plates Joseph Smith did translate—only he spelt the mysterious characters "caractors"—and out of the dots and scratches produced a volume of six hundred closely printed pages, containing the books of Nephi, first and second, Jacob, Enos, Jarom, Omni, Mormon, Mosiah, the Record of Zeniff, the book of Alma Helaman, the third of Nephi, the book of Ether (the whole thing is a powerful anæsthetic, by the way), and the final book of Mononi. Three men, of whom one I believe is now living, bear solemn witness that the angel with the spectacles appeared unto them; eight other men swear solemnly that they have seen the golden plates of the revelation; and upon this testimony the book of Mormon stands. The Mormon Bible begins at the days of Zedekiah, King of Judah, and ends in a wild and weltering quagmire of tribal fights, bits of revelation, and wholesale cribs from the Bible. Very sincerely did I sympathise with the inspired brothers as I waded through their joint production. As a humble fellow–worker in the field of fiction, I knew what it was to get good

names for one's characters. But Joseph and Hyrum were harder bestead than ever I have been; and bolder men to boot. They created Teancum and Coriantumy, Pakhoran, Kishkumen, and Gadianton, and other priceless names which the memory does not hold; but of geography they wisely steered clear, and were astutely vague as to the localities of places, because you see they were by no means certain what lay in the next county to their own. They marched and countermarched bloodthirsty armies across their pages; and added new and amazing chapters to the records of the New Testament, and reorganised the heavens and the earth as it is always lawful to do in print. But they could not achieve style, and it was foolish of them to let into their weird Mosaic pieces of the genuine Bible whenever the labouring pen dropped from its toilsome parody to a sentence or two of vile, bad English or downright "penny dreadfulism." "And Moses said unto the people of Israel: 'Great Scott! what air you doing?'" There is no sentence in the Book of Mormon word for word like the foregoing; but the general tone is not widely different.

There are the makings of a very fine creed about Mormonism. To begin with, the Church is rather more absolute than that of Rome. Drop the polygamy plank in the platform, but on the other hand deal lightly with certain forms of excess. Keep the quality of the recruits down to a low mental level and see that the best of the agricultural science available is in the hands of the Elders, and you have there a first–class engine for pioneer work. The tawdry mysticism and the borrowings from Freemasonry serve the low–caste Swede and the Dane, the Welshman and the Cornish cottar, just as well as a highly organised Heaven.

I went about the streets and peeped into people's front windows, and the decorations upon the tables were after the manner of the year 1850. Main Street was full of country folk from the outside come in to trade with the Zion Mercantile Co–operative Institute. The Church, I fancy, looks after the finances of this thing, and it consequently pays good dividends. The faces of the women were not lovely. Indeed, but for the certainty that ugly persons are just as irrational in the matter of undivided love as the beautiful, it seemed that polygamy was a blessed institution for the women, and that only the spiritual power could drive the hulking, board–faced men into it. The women wore hideous garments, and the men seemed to be tied up with string. They would market all that afternoon, and on Sunday go to the praying–place. I tried to talk to a few of them, but they spoke strange tongues and stared and behaved like cows. Yet one woman, and not an altogether ugly one, confided to me that she hated the idea of Salt Lake City being turned into a show–place for the amusement of the Gentile.

"If we 'ave our own institutions, that ain't no reason why people should come 'ere and stare at us, his it?"

The dropped "h" betrayed her.

"And when did you leave England?" I said.

"Summer of '84. I am from Dorset," she said. "The Mormon agents was very good to us, and we was very poor. Now we're better off—my father an' mother an' me."

"Then you like the State?"

She misunderstood at first. "Oh, I ain't livin' in the state of polygamy. Not me yet. I ain't married. I like where I am. I've got things o' my own—and some land."

"But I suppose you will—"

"Not me. I ain't like them Swedes an' Danes. I ain't got nothin' to say for or against polygamy. It's the Elders' business, an' between you an' me I don't think it's going on much longer. You'll 'ear them in the 'ouse to–morrer talkin' as if it was spreadin' all over America. The Swedes they think it *his*. I know it hisn't."

"But you've got your land all right."

"Oh, yes, we've got our land an' we never say aught against polygamy o' course—father an' mother an' me."

It strikes me that there is a fraud somewhere. You've never heard of the rice–Christians, have you?

I should have liked to have spoken to the maiden at length, but she dived into the Zion Co–op. and a man captured me, saying that it was my bounden duty to see the sights of Salt Lake. These comprised the egg–shaped Tabernacle, the Beehive, and town houses of Brigham Young; the same great ruffian's tomb with assorted samples of his wives sleeping round him (just as the eleven faithful ones sleep round the ashes of Runjit Singh outside Fort Lahore), and one or two other curiosities. But all these things have been described by abler pens than mine. The animal–houses where Brigham used to pack his wives are grubby villas; the Tabernacle is a shingled fraud, and the Tithing House where all the revenue returns seem to be made, much resembles a stable. The Mormons have a paper currency of their own —ecclesiastical bank–notes which are exchanged for local produce. But the little boys of the place prefer the bullion of the Gentiles. It is not pleasant to be taken round a township with your guide stopping before every third house to say: "That's where Elder so and so kept Amelia Bathershins, his fifth wife—no, his third. Amelia she was took on after Keziah, but Keziah was the Elder's pet, an' he didn't dare to let Amelia come across Keziah for fear of her spilin' Keziah's beauty." The Mussulmans are quite right. The minute that all the domestic details of polygamy are discussed in the mouths of the people, that institution is ready to fall. I shook off my guide when he had told me his very last

doubtful tale, and went on alone. An ordered peace and a perfection of quiet luxury is the note of the city of Salt Lake. The houses stand in generous and well–groomed grass–plots, none very much worse or better than their neighbours. Creepers grow over the house fronts, and there is a very pleasant music of wind among the trees in the vast empty streets bringing a smell of hay and the flowers of summer.

On a tableland overlooking all the city stands the United States garrison of infantry and artillery. The State of Utah can do nearly anything it pleases until that much–to–be–desired hour when the Gentile vote shall quietly swamp out Mormonism; but the garrison is kept there in case of accidents. The big, shark–mouthed, pig–eared, heavy–boned farmers sometimes take to their creed with wildest fanaticism, and in past years have made life excessively unpleasant for the Gentile when he was few in the land. But to–day, so far from killing openly or secretly, or burning Gentile farms, it is all the Mormon dares do to feebly try to boycott the interloper. His journals preach defiance to the United States Government, and in the Tabernacle of a Sunday the preachers follow suit. When I went down there the place was full of people who would have been much better for a washing. A man rose up and told them that they were the chosen of God, the elect of Israel, that they were to obey their priest, and that there was a good time coming. I fancy that they had heard all this before so many times it produced no impression whatever; even as the sublimest mysteries of another Faith lost salt through constant iteration. They breathed heavily through their noses and stared straight in front of them—impassive as flatfish.

And that evening I went up to the garrison post—one of the most coveted of all the army commands—and overlooked the City of the Saints as it lay in the circle of its forbidding hills. You can speculate a good deal about the mass of human misery, the loves frustrated, the gentle hearts broken, and the strong souls twisted from the law of life to a fiercer following of the law of death, that the hills have seen. How must it have been in the old days when the footsore emigrants broke through into the circle and knew that they were cut off from hope of return or sight of friends—were handed over to the power of the friends that called themselves priests of the Most High? "But for the grace of God there goes Richard Baxter," as the eminent divine once said. It seemed good that fate did not order me to be a brick in the up–building of the Mormon church, that has so aptly established herself by the borders of a lake bitter, salt, and hopeless.

No. XXXIII

How I Met Certain People of Importance Between Salt Lake and Omaha - "Much Have I Seen, Cities and Men."

Let there be no misunderstanding about the matter. I love this People, and if any contemptuous criticism has to be done, I will do it myself. My heart has gone out to them beyond all other peoples; and for the life of me I cannot tell why. They are bleeding–raw at the edges, almost more conceited than the English, vulgar with a massive vulgarity which is as though the Pyramids were coated with Christmas–cake sugar–works. Cocksure they are, lawless and as casual as they are cocksure; but I love them, and I realised it when I met an Englishman who laughed at them. He proved conclusively that they were all wrong, from their tariff to their go–as–you–please Civil Service, and beneath the consideration of a true Briton.

"I admit everything," said I. "Their Government's provisional; their law's the notion of the moment; their railways are made of hair–pins and match–sticks, and most of their good luck lives in their woods and mines and rivers and not in their brains; but for all that, they be the biggest, finest, and best people on the surface of the globe! Just you wait a hundred years and see how they'll behave when they've had the screw put on them and have forgotten a few of the patriarchal teachings of the late Mister George Washington. Wait till the Anglo–American–German–Jew—the Man of the Future—is properly equipped. He'll have just the least little kink in his hair now and again; he'll carry the English lungs above the Teuton feet that can walk for ever; and he will wave long, thin, bony Yankee hands with the big blue veins on the wrist, from one end of the earth to the other. He'll be the finest writer, poet, and dramatist, 'specially dramatist, that the world as it recollects itself has ever seen. By virtue of his Jew blood—just a little, little drop—he'll be a musician and a painter too. At present there is too much balcony and too little Romeo in the life–plays of his fellow–citizens. Later on, when the proportion is adjusted and he sees the possibilities of his land, he will produce things that will make the effete East stare. He will also be a complex and highly composite administrator. There is nothing known to man that he will not be, and his country will sway the world with one foot as a man tilts a see–saw plank!"

"But this is worse than the Eagle at its worst. Do you seriously believe all that?" said the Englishman.

"If I believe anything seriously, all this I most firmly believe. You wait and see. Sixty million people, chiefly of English instincts, who are trained from youth to believe that nothing is impossible, don't slink

through the centuries like Russian peasantry. They are bound to leave their mark somewhere, and don't you forget it."

But isn't it sad to think that with all Eternity behind and before us we cannot, even though we would pay for it with sorrow, filch from the Immensities one hundred poor years of life, wherein to watch the two Great Experiments? A hundred years hence India and America will be worth observing. At present the one is burned out and the other is only just stoking up. When I left my opponent there was much need for faith, because I fell into the hands of a perfectly delightful man whom I had met casually in the street, sitting in a chair on the pavement, smoking a huge cigar. He was a commercial traveller, and his beat lay through Southern Mexico, and he told me tales, of forgotten cities, stone gods up to their sacred eyes in forest growth, Mexican priests, rebellions, and dictatorships, that made my hair curl. It was he who dragged me forth to bathe in Salt Lake, which is some fifteen miles away from the city, and reachable by many trains which are but open tram–cars. The track, like all American tracks, was terrifying in its roughness; and the end of the journey disclosed the nakedness of the accommodation. There were piers and band houses and refreshment stalls built over the solid grey levels of the lake, but they only accentuated the utter barrenness of the place. Americans don't mix with their scenery as yet.

And "Have faith," said the commercial traveller as he walked into water heavy as quicksilver. "Walk!" I walked, and I walked till my legs flew up and I had to walk as one struggling with a high wind, but still I rode head and shoulders above the water. It was a horrible feeling, this inability to sink. Swimming was not much use. You couldn't get a grip of the water, so I e'en sat me down and drifted like a luxurious anemone among the hundreds that were bathing in that place. You could wallow for three–quarters of an hour in that warm, sticky brine and fear no evil consequences; but when you came out you were coated with white salt from top to toe. And if you accidentally swallowed a mouthful of the water, you died. This is true, because I swallowed half a mouthful and was half–dead in consequence.

The commercial traveller on our return journey across the level flats that fringe the lake's edge bade me note some of the customs of his people. The great open railway car held about a hundred men and maidens, "coming up with a song from the sea." They sang and they shouted and they exchanged witticisms of the most poignant, and comported themselves like their brothers and sisters over the seas—the 'Arries and 'Arriets of the older world. And there sat behind me two modest maidens in white, alone and unattended. To these the privileged youth of the car—a youth of a marvellous range of voice—proffered undying affection. They laughed, but made no reply in

words. The suit was renewed, and with extravagant imagery; the nearest seats applauding. When we arrived at the city the maidens turned and went their way up a dark tree–shaded street, and the boys elsewhere. Whereat, recollecting what the London rough was like, I marvelled that they did not pursue. "It's all right," said the commercial traveller. "If they had followed—well, I guess some one would ha' shot 'em." The very next day on those very peaceful cars returning from the Lake some one was shot—dead. He was what they call a "sport," which is American for a finished "leg," and he had an argument with a police officer, and the latter slew him. I saw his funeral go down the main street. There were nearly thirty carriages, filled with doubtful men, and women not in the least doubtful, and the local papers said that deceased had his merits, but it didn't much matter, because if the Sheriff hadn't dropped him he would assuredly have dropped the Sheriff. Somehow this jarred on my sensitive feelings, and I went away, though the commercial traveller would fain have entertained me in his own house, he knowing not my name. Twice through the long hot nights we talked, tilting up our chairs on the sidewalk, of the future of America.

You should hear the Saga of the States reeled off by a young and enthusiastic citizen who had just carved out for himself a home, filled it with a pretty little wife, and is preparing to embark on commerce on his own account. I was tempted to believe that pistol–shots were regrettable accidents and lawlessness only the top scum on the great sea of humanity. I am tempted to believe that still, though baked and dusty Utah is very many miles behind me.

Then chance threw me into the arms of another and very different commercial traveller, as we pulled out of Utah on our way to Omaha *via* the Rockies. He travelled in biscuits, of which more anon, and Fate had smitten him very heavily, having at one stroke knocked all the beauty and joy out of his poor life. So he journeyed with a case of samples as one dazed, and his eyes took no pleasure in anything that he saw. In his despair he had withdrawn himself to his religion,—he was a Baptist,—and spoke of its consolation with the artless freedom that an American generally exhibits when he is talking about his most sacred private affairs. There was a desert beyond Utah, hot and barren as Mian Mir in May. The sun baked the car–roof, and the dust caked the windows, and through the dust and the glare the man with the biscuits bore witness to his creed, which seems to include one of the greatest miracles in the world—the immediate unforeseen, self–conscious redemption of the soul by means very similar to those which turned Paul to the straight path.

"You must experi*ence* religion," he repeated, his mouth twitching and his eyes black–ringed with his recent loss. "You must experi*ence*

religion. You can't tell when you're goin' to get, or haow; but it will come—it will come, Sir, like a lightning stroke, an' you will wrestle with yourself before you receive full conviction and assurance."

"How long does that take?" I asked reverently.

"It may take hours. It may take days. I knew a man in San Jo who lay under conviction for a month an' then he got the sperrit—as you *must* git it."

"And then?"

"And then you are saved. You feel that, an' you kin endure anything," he sighed. "Yes, anything. I don't care what it is, though I allow that some things are harder than others."

"Then you have to wait for the miracle to be worked by powers outside yourself. And if the miracle doesn't work?"

"But it *must*. I tell you it must. It comes to all who profess with faith."

I learned a good deal about that creed as the train fled on; and I wondered as I learned. It was a strange thing to watch that poor human soul, broken and bowed by its loss, nerving itself against each new pang of pain with the iterated assurance that it was safe against the pains of Hell.

The heat was stifling. We quitted the desert and launched into the rolling green plains of Colorado. Dozing uneasily with every removable rag removed, I was roused by a blast of intense cold and the drumming of a hundred drums. The train had stopped. Far as the eye could range the land was white under two feet of hail—each hailstone as big as the top of a sherry–glass. I saw a young colt by the side of the track standing with his poor little fluffy back to the pitiless pelting. He was pounded to death. An old horse met his doom on the run. He galloped wildly towards the train, but his hind legs dropped into a hole half water and half ice. He beat the ground with his fore–feet for a minute and then rolling over on his side submitted quietly to be killed.

When the storm ceased, we picked our way cautiously and crippledly over a track that might give way at any moment. The Western driver urges his train much as does the Subaltern the bounding pony, and 'twould seem with an equal sense of responsibility. If a foot does go wrong, why there you are, don't you know, and if it is all right, why all right it is, don't you know. But I would sooner be on the pony than the train.

This seems a good place wherein to preach on American versatility. When Mr. Howells writes a novel, when a reckless hero dams a flood by heaving a dynamite–shattered mountain into it, or when a notoriety–hunting preacher marries a couple in a balloon, you shall hear the great American press rise on its hind legs and walk

round mouthing over the versatility of the American citizen. And he is versatile—horribly so. The unlimited exercise of the right of private judgment (which, by the way, is a weapon not one man in ten is competent to handle), his blatant cocksureness, and the dry–air–bred restlessness that makes him crawl all over the furniture when he is talking to you, conspire to make him versatile. But what he calls versatility the impartial bystander of Anglo–Indian extraction is apt to deem mere casualness, and dangerous casualness at that. No man can grasp the inwardness of an employ by the light of pure reason—even though that reason be republican. He must serve an apprenticeship to one craft and learn that craft all the days of his life if he wishes to excel therein. Otherwise he merely "puts the thing through somehow;" and occasionally he doesn't. But wherein lies the beauty of this form of mental suppleness? Old man California, whom I shall love and respect always, told me one or two anecdotes about American versatility and its consequences that came back to my mind with direful force as the train progressed. We didn't upset, but I don't think that that was the fault of the driver or the men who made the track. Take up—you can easily find them—the accounts of ten consecutive railway catastrophes—not little accidents, but first–class fatalities, when the long cars turn over, take fire, and roast the luckless occupants alive. To seven out of the ten you shall find appended the cheerful statement: "The accident is supposed to have been due to the rails spreading." That means the metals were spiked down to the ties with such versatility that the spikes or the tracks drew under the constant vibration of the traffic, and the metals opened out. No one is hanged for these little affairs.

We began to climb hills, and then we stopped—at night in darkness, while men threw sand under the wheels and crowbarred the track and then "guessed" that we might proceed. Not being in the least anxious to face my Maker half asleep and rubbing my eyes, I went forward to a common car, and was rewarded by two hours' conversation with the stranded, broken–down, husband–abandoned actress of a fourth–rate, stranded, broken–down, manager–bereft company. She was muzzy with beer, reduced to her last dollar, fearful that there would be no one to meet her at Omaha, and wept at intervals because she had given the conductor a five–dollar bill to change, and he hadn't come back. He was an Irishman, so I knew he couldn't steal, and I addressed myself to the task of consolation. I was rewarded, after a decent interval, by the history of a life so wild, so mixed, so desperately improbable, and yet so simply probable, and above all so quick—not fast—in its kaleidoscopic changes that the *Pioneer* would reject any summary of it. And so you will never know how she, the beery woman with the tangled blond hair, was once a

girl on a farm in far–off New Jersey. How he, a travelling actor, had wooed and won her,—"but Paw he was always set against Alf,"—and how he and she embarked all their little capital on the word of a faithless manager who disbanded his company a hundred miles from nowhere, and how she and Alf and a third person who had not yet made any noise in the world, had to walk the railway–track and beg from the farm–houses; how that third person arrived and went away again with a wail, and how Alf took to the whisky and other things still more calculated to make a wife unhappy; and how after barn–stormings, insults, shooting–scrapes, and pitiful collapses of poor companies she had once won an encore. It was not a cheerful tale to listen to. There was a real actress in the Pullman,—such an one as travels sumptuously with a maid and dressing–case,—and my draggle–tail thought of appealing to her for help, but broke down after several attempts to walk into the car jauntily as befitted a sister in the profession. Then the conductor reappeared,—the five–dollar bill honestly changed,—and she wept by reason of beer and gratitude together, and then fell asleep waveringly, alone in the car, and became almost beautiful and quite kissable; while the Man with the Sorrow stood at the door between actress and actress and preached grim sermons on the certain end of each if they did not mend their ways and find regeneration through the miracle of the Baptist creed. Yes, we were a queer company going up to the Rockies together. I was the luckiest, because when a breakdown occurred, and we were delayed for twelve hours, I ate all the Baptist's sample–biscuits. They were various in composition, but nourishing. Always travel with a "drummer."

No. XXXIV

Across the Great Divide; and How the Man Gring Showed Me the Garments of the Ellewomen

After much dallying and more climbing we came to a pass like all the Bolan Passes in the world, and the Black Cañon of the Gunnison called they it. We had been climbing for very many hours, and attained a modest elevation of some seven or eight thousand feet above the sea, when we entered a gorge, remote from the sun, where the rocks were two thousand feet sheer, and where a rock–splintered river roared and howled ten feet below a track which seemed to have been built on the simple principle of dropping miscellaneous dirt into the river and pinning a few rails a–top. There was a glory and a wonder and a mystery about that mad ride which I felt keenly (you will find it properly dressed up in the guide–books), until I had to offer prayers for the safety of the train. There was no hope of seeing the track two hundred yards ahead. We seemed to be running into the bowels of the earth at the invitation of an irresponsible stream. Then the solid rock would open and disclose a curve of awful twistfulness. Then the driver put on all steam, and we would go round that curve on one wheel chiefly, the Gunnison River gnashing its teeth below. The cars overhung the edge of the water, and if a single one of the rails had chosen to spread, nothing in the wide world could have saved us from drowning. I knew we should damage something in the end—the sombre horrors of the gorge, the rush of the jade–green water below, and the cheerful tales told by the conductor made me certain of the catastrophe.

We had just cleared the Black Cañon and another gorge, and were sailing out into open country nine thousand feet above the level of the sea, when we came most suddenly round a corner upon a causeway across a waste water—half dam and half quarry–pool. The locomotive gave one wild "Hoo! Hoo! Hoo!" but it was too late. He was a beautiful bull, and goodness only knows why he had chosen the track for a constitutional with his wife. *She* was flung to the left, but the cow–catcher caught *him*, and turning him round, heaved him shoulder deep into the pool. The expression of blank, blind bewilderment on his bovine, jovine face was wonderful to behold. He was not angry. I don't think he was even scared, though he must have flown ten yards through the air. All he wanted to know was: "Will somebody have the goodness to tell a respectable old gentleman what in the world, or out of it, has occurred?" And five minutes later the stream that had been snapping at our heels in the gorges split itself into a dozen silver threads on a breezy upland, and became an innocent trout beck, and

we halted at a half–dead city, the name of which does not remain with me. It had originally been built on the crest of a wave of prosperity. Once ten thousand people had walked its street; but the boom had collapsed. The great brick houses and the factories were empty. The population lived in little timber shanties on the fringes of the deserted town. There were some railway workshops and things, and the hotel (whose pavement formed the platform of the railway) contained one hundred and more rooms—empty. The place, in its half–inhabitedness, was more desolate than Amber or Chitor. But a man said: "Trout—six pounds—two miles away," and the Sorrowful Man and myself went in search of 'em. The town was ringed by a circle of hills all alive with little thunder–storms that broke across the soft green of the plain in wisps and washes of smoke and amber.

To our tiny party associated himself a lawyer from Chicago. We foregathered on the question of flies, but I didn't expect to meet Elijah Pogram in the flesh. He delivered orations on the future of England and America, and of the Great Federation that the years will bring forth when America and England will belt the globe with their linked hands. According to the notions of the British, he made an ass of himself, but for all his high–falutin he talked sense. I might knock through England on a four months' tour and not find a man capable of putting into words the passionate patriotism that possessed the little Chicago lawyer. And he was a man with points, for he offered me three days' shooting in Illinois, if I would step out of my path a little. I might travel for ten years up and down England ere I found a man who would give a complete stranger so much as a sandwich, and for twenty ere I squeezed as much enthusiasm out of a Britisher. He and I talked politics and trout–flies all one sultry day as we wandered up and down the shallows of the stream aforesaid. Little fish are sweet. I spent two hours whipping a ripple for a fish that I knew was there, and in the pasture–scented dusk caught a three–pounder on a ragged old brown hackle and landed him after ten minutes' excited argument. He was a beauty. If ever any man works the Western trout–streams, he would do well to bring out with him the dingiest flies he possesses. The natives laugh at the tiny English hooks, but they hold, and duns and drabs and sober greys seem to tickle the æsthetic tastes of the trout. For salmon (but don't say that I told you) use the spoon—gold on one side, silver on the other. It is as killing as is a similar article with fish of another calibre. The natives seem to use much too coarse tackle.

It was a search for a small boy who should know the river that revealed to me a new phase of life—slack, slovenly, and shiftless, but very interesting. There was a family in a packing–case hut on the outskirts of the town. They had seen the city when it was on the boom

and made pretence of being the metropolis of the Rockies; and when the boom was over, they did not go. She was affable, but deeply coated with dirt; he was grim and grimy, and the little children were simply caked with filth of various descriptions. But they lived in a certain sort of squalid luxury, six or eight of them in two rooms; and they enjoyed the local society. It was their eight–year–old son whom I tried to take out with me, but he had been catching trout all his life and "guessed he didn't feel like coming," though I proffered him six shillings for what ought to have been a day's pleasuring. "I'll stay with Maw," he said, and from that attitude I could not move him. Maw didn't attempt to argue with him. "If he says he won't come, he won't," she said, as though he were one of the elemental forces of nature instead of a spankable brat; and "Paw," lounging by the store, refused to interfere. Maw told me that she had been a school–teacher in her not–so–distant youth, but did not tell me what I was dying to know—how she arrived at this mucky tenement at the back of beyond, and why. Though preserving the prettinesses of her New England speech, she had come to regard washing as a luxury. Paw chewed tobacco and spat from time to time. Yet, when he opened his mouth for other purposes, he spoke like a well–educated man. There was a story there, but I couldn't get at it.

Next day the Man with the Sorrow and myself and a few others began the real ascent of the Rockies; up to that time our climbing didn't count. The train ran violently up a steep place and was taken to pieces. Five cars were hitched on to two locomotives, and two cars to one locomotive. This seemed to be a kind and thoughtful act, but I was idiot enough to go forward and watch the coupling–on of the two rear cars in which Cæsar and his fortunes were to travel. Some one had lost or eaten the regularly ordained coupling, and a man picked up from the tailboard of the engine a single iron link about as thick as a fetter–link watch–chain, and "guessed it would do." Get hauled up a Simla cliff by the hook of a lady's parasol if you wish to appreciate my sentiments when the cars moved uphill and the link drew tight. Miles away and two thousand feet above our heads rose the shoulder of a hill epauletted with the long line of a snow–tunnel. The first section of the cars crawled a quarter of a mile ahead of us, the track snaked and looped behind, and there was a black drop to the left. So we went up and up and up till the thin air grew thinner and the *chunk–chunk–chunk*, of the labouring locomotive was answered by the oppressed beating of the exhausted heart. Through the chequed light and shade of the snow tunnels (horrible caverns of rude timbering) we ground our way, halting now and again to allow a down–train to pass. One monster of forty mineral–cars slid past, scarce held by four locomotives, their brakes screaming and chortling in chorus; and in

the end, after a glimpse at half America spread mapwise leagues below us, we halted at the head of the longest snow tunnel of all, on the crest of the divide, between ten and eleven thousand feet above the level of the sea. The locomotive wished to draw breath, and the passengers to gather the flowers that nodded impertinently through the chinks of the boarding. A lady passenger's nose began to bleed, and other ladies threw themselves down on the seats and gasped with the gasping train, while a wind as keen as a knife–edge rioted down the grimy tunnel.

Then, despatching a pilot–engine to clear the way, we began the downward portion of the journey with every available brake on, and frequent shrieks, till after some hours we reached the level plain, and later the city of Denver, where the Man with the Sorrow went his way and left me to journey on to Omaha alone, after one hasty glance at Denver. The pulse of that town was too like the rushing mighty wind in the Rocky Mountain tunnel. It made me tired because complete strangers desired me to do something to mines which were in mountains, and to purchase building blocks upon inaccessible cliffs; and once, a woman urged that I should supply her with strong drinks. I had almost forgotten that such attacks were possible in any land, for the outward and visible signs of public morality in American towns are generally safe–guarded. For that I respect this people. Omaha, Nebraska, was but a halting–place on the road to Chicago, but it revealed to me horrors that I would not willingly have missed. The city to casual investigation seemed to be populated entirely by Germans, Poles, Slavs, Hungarians, Croats, Magyars, and all the scum of the Eastern European States, but it must have been laid out by Americans. No other people would cut the traffic of a main street with two streams of railway lines, each some eight or nine tracks wide, and cheerfully drive tram–cars across the metals. Every now and again they have horrible railway–crossing accidents at Omaha, but nobody seems to think of building an overhead–bridge. That would interfere with the vested interests of the undertakers.

Be blessed to hear some details of one of that class.

There was a shop the like of which I had never seen before. Its windows were filled with dress–coats for men, and dresses for women. But the studs of the shirts were made of stamped cloth upon the shirt front, and there were no trousers to those coats—nothing but a sweep of cheap black cloth falling like an abbé's frock. In the doorway sat a young man reading Pollock's *Course of Time*, and by that I knew that he was an undertaker. His name was Gring, which is a beautiful name, and I talked to him on the mysteries of his Craft. He was an enthusiast and an artist. I told him how corpses were burnt in India. Said he: "We're vastly superior. We hold—that is to say, embalm—our dead.

So!" Whereupon he produced the horrible weapons of his trade, and most practically showed me how you "held" a man back from that corruption which is his birthright. "And I wish I could live a few generations just to see how my people keep. But I'm sure it's all right. Nothing can touch 'em after *I*'ve embalmed 'em." Then he displayed one of those ghastly dress–suits, and when I laid a shuddering hand upon it, behold it crumpled to nothing, for the white linen was sewn on to the black cloth and—there was no back to it! That was the horror. The garment was a shell. "We dress a man in that," said Gring, laying it out tastily on the counter. "As you see here, our caskets have a plate–glass window in front" (Oh me, but that window in the coffin was fitted with plush like a brougham–window!), "and you don't see anything below the level of the man's waistcoat. Consequently … " He unrolled the terrible cheap black cloth that falls down over the stark feet, and I jumped back. "Of course a man can be dressed in his own clothes if he likes, but these are the regular things: and for women look at this!" He took up the body of a high–necked dinner–dress in subdued lilac, slashed and puffed and bedeviled with black, but, like the dress–suit, backless, and below the waist turning to shroud. "That's for an old maid. But for young girls we give white with imitation pearls round the neck. That looks very pretty through the window of the casket—you see there's a cushion for the head—with flowers banked all round." Can you imagine anything more awful than to take your last rest as much of a dead fraud as ever you were a living lie—to go into the darkness one half of you shaved, trimmed and dressed for an evening party, while the other half—the half that your friends cannot see—is enwrapped in a flapping black sheet?

I know a little about burial customs in various places in the world, and I tried hard to make Mr. Gring comprehend dimly the awful heathendom that he was responsible for—the grotesquerie—the giggling horror of it all. But he couldn't see it. Even when he showed me a little boy's last suit, he couldn't see it. He said it was quite right to embalm and trick out and hypocritically bedizen the poor innocent dead in their superior cushioned and pillowed caskets with the window in front.

Bury me cased in canvas like a fishing–rod, in the deep sea; burn me on a back–water of the Hughli with damp wood and no oil; pin me under a Pullman car and let the lighted stove do its worst; sizzle me with a fallen electric wire or whelm me in the sludge of a broken river dam; but may I never go down to the Pit grinning out of a plate–glass window, in a backless dress–coat, and the front half of a black stuff dressing–gown; not though I were "held" against the ravage of the grave for ever and ever. Amen!

No. XXXV

How I Struck Chicago, and How Chicago Struck Me. of Religion, Politics, and Pig-sticking, and the Incarnation of the City Among Shambles - "I Know Thy Cunning and Thy Greed, Thy Hard, High Lust and Wilful Deed, and All Thy Glory Loves to Tell of Specious Gifts Material."

I have struck a city,—a real city,—and they call it Chicago. The other places do not count. San Francisco was a pleasure–resort as well as a city, and Salt Lake was a phenomenon. This place is the first American city I have encountered. It holds rather more than a million people with bodies, and stands on the same sort of soil as Calcutta. Having seen it, I urgently desire never to see it again. It is inhabited by savages. Its water is the water of the Hugli, and its air is dirt. Also it says that it is the "boss" town of America.

I do not believe that it has anything to do with this country. They told me to go to the Palmer House, which is a gilded and mirrored rabbit–warren, and there I found a huge hall of tessellated marble, crammed with people talking about money and spitting about everywhere. Other barbarians charged in and out of this inferno with letters and telegrams in their hands, and yet others shouted at each other. A man who had drunk quite as much as was good for him told me that this was "the finest hotel in the finest city on God Almighty's earth." By the way, when an American wishes to indicate the next county or State he says, "God A'mighty's earth." This prevents discussion and flatters his vanity.

Then I went out into the streets, which are long and flat and without end. And verily it is not a good thing to live in the East for any length of time. Your ideas grow to clash with those held by every right–thinking white man. I looked down interminable vistas flanked with nine, ten, and fifteen storied houses, and crowded with men and women, and the show impressed me with a great horror. Except in London—and I have forgotten what London is like—I had never seen so many white people together, and never such a collection of miserables. There was no colour in the street and no beauty—only a maze of wire–ropes overhead and dirty stone flagging underfoot. A cab–driver volunteered to show me the glory of the town for so much an hour, and with him I wandered far. He conceived that all this turmoil and squash was a thing to be reverently admired; that it was good to huddle men together in fifteen layers, one atop of the other, and to dig holes in the ground for offices. He said that Chicago was a live town, and that all the creatures hurrying by me were engaged in business. That is to say, they were trying to make some money, that

they might not die through lack of food to put into their bellies. He took me to canals, black as ink, and filled with untold abominations, and bade me watch the stream of traffic across the bridges. He then took me into a saloon, and, while I drank, made me note that the floor was covered with coins sunk into cement. A Hottentot would not have been guilty of this sort of barbarism. The coins made an effect pretty enough, but the man who put them there had no thought to beauty, and therefore he was a savage. Then my cab–driver showed me business–blocks, gay with signs and studded with fantastic and absurd advertisements of goods, and looking down the long street so adorned it was as though each vender stood at his door howling: "For the sake of money, employ or buy of *me* and me only!" Have you ever seen a crowd at our famine relief distributions? You know then how men leap into the air, stretching out their arms above the crowd in the hope of being seen; while the women dolorously slap the stomachs of their children and whimper. I had sooner watch famine–relief than the white man engaged in what he calls legitimate competition. The one I understand. The other makes me ill. And the cabman said that these things were the proof of progress; and by that I knew he had been reading his newspaper, as every intelligent American should. The papers tell their readers in language fitted to their comprehension that the snarling together of telegraph wires, the heaving up of houses, and the making of money is progress.

I spent ten hours in that huge wilderness, wandering through scores of miles of these terrible streets, and jostling some few hundred thousand of these terrible people who talked money through their noses. The cabman left me: but after a while I picked up another man who was full of figures, and into my ears he poured them as occasion required or the big blank factories suggested. Here they turned out so many hundred thousand dollars' worth of such and such an article; there so many million other things; this house was worth so many million dollars; that one so many million more or less. It was like listening to a child babbling of its hoard of shells. It was like watching a fool playing with buttons. But I was expected to do more than listen or watch. He demanded that I should admire; and the utmost that I could say was: "Are these things so? Then I am very sorry for you." That made him angry, and he said that insular envy made me unresponsive. So, you see, I could not make him understand.

About four and a half hours after Adam was turned out of the garden of Eden he felt hungry, and so, bidding Eve take care that her head was not broken by the descending fruit, shinned up a cocoanut palm. That hurt his legs, cut his breast, and made him breathe heavily, and Eve was tormented with fear lest her lord should miss his footing and so bring the tragedy of this world to an end ere the curtain had

fairly risen. Had I met Adam then, I should have been sorry for him. To–day I find eleven hundred thousand of his sons just as far advanced as their father in the art of getting food, and immeasurably inferior to him in that they think that their palm–trees lead straight to the skies. Consequently I am sorry in rather more than a million different ways. In our East bread comes naturally even to the poorest by a little scratching or the gift of a friend not quite so poor. In less favoured countries one is apt to forget. Then I went to bed. And that was on a Saturday night.

Sunday brought me the queerest experience of all—a revelation of barbarism complete. I found a place that was officially described as a church. It was a circus really, but that the worshippers did not know. There were flowers all about the building, which was fitted up with plush and stained oak and much luxury, including twisted brass candlesticks of severest Gothic design. To these things, and a congregation of savages, entered suddenly a wonderful man completely in the confidence of their God, whom he treated colloquially and exploited very much as a newspaper reporter would exploit a foreign potentate. But, unlike the newspaper reporter, he never allowed his listeners to forget that he and not He was the centre of attraction. With a voice of silver and with imagery borrowed from the auction–room, he built up for his hearers a heaven on the lines of the Palmer House (but with all the gilding real gold and all the plate–glass diamond) and set in the centre of it a loud–voiced, argumentative, and very shrewd creation that he called God. One sentence at this point caught my delighted ear. It was *apropos* of some question of the Judgment Day and ran: "No! I tell you God doesn't do business that way." He was giving them a deity whom they could comprehend, in a gold and jewel heaven in which they could take a natural interest. He interlarded his performance with the slang of the streets, the counter, and the Exchange, and he said that religion ought to enter into daily life. Consequently I presume he introduced it *as* daily life—his own and the life of his friends.

Then I escaped before the blessing, desiring no benediction at such hands. But the persons who listened seemed to enjoy themselves, and I understood that I had met with a popular preacher. Later on when I had perused the sermons of a gentleman called Talmage and some others, I perceived that I had been listening to a very mild specimen. Yet that man, with his brutal gold and silver idols, his hands–in–pocket, cigar–in–mouth, and hat–on–the–back–of–the–head style of dealing with the sacred vessels would count himself spiritually quite competent to send a mission to convert the Indians. All that Sunday I listened to people who said that the mere fact of spiking down strips of iron to wood and getting a steam and iron thing to run

along them was progress. That the telephone was progress, and the network of wires overhead was progress. They repeated their statements again and again. One of them took me to their city hall and board of trade works and pointed it out with pride. It was very ugly, but very big, and the streets in front of it were narrow and unclean. When I saw the faces of the men who did business in that building I felt that there had been a mistake in their billeting.

By the way, 'tis a consolation to feel that I am not writing to an English audience. Then should I have to fall into feigned ecstasies over the marvellous progress of Chicago since the days of the great fire, to allude casually to the raising of the entire city so many feet above the level of the lake which it faces, and generally to grovel before the golden calf. But you, who are desperately poor, and therefore by these standards of no account, know things, and will understand when I write that they have managed to get a million of men together on flat land, and that the bulk of these men appear to be lower than *mahajans* and not so companionable as a punjabi *jat* after harvest. But I don't think it was the blind hurry of the people, their argot, and their grand ignorance of things beyond their immediate interests that displeased me so much as a study of the daily papers of Chicago. Imprimis, there was some sort of dispute between New York and Chicago as to which town should give an exhibition of products to be hereafter holden, and through the medium of their more dignified journals the two cities were ya–hooing and hi–yi–ing at each other like opposition newsboys. They called it humour, but it sounded like something quite different. That was only the first trouble. The second lay in the tone of the productions. Leading articles which include gems such as: "Back of such and such a place," or "We noticed, Tuesday, such an event," or "don't" for "does not" are things to be accepted with thankfulness. All that made me want to cry was that, in these papers, were faithfully reproduced all the war–cries and "back–talk" of the Palmer House bar, the slang of the barbers' shops, the mental elevation and integrity of the Pullman–car porter, the dignity of the Dime Museum, and the accuracy of the excited fishwife. I am sternly forbidden to believe that the paper educates the public. Then I am compelled to believe that the public educate the paper?

Just when the sense of unreality and oppression were strongest upon me, and when I most wanted help, a man sat at my side and began to talk what he called politics. I had chanced to pay about six shillings for a travelling–cap worth eighteen pence, and he made of the fact a text for a sermon. He said that this was a rich country and that the people liked to pay two hundred per cent on the value of a thing. They could afford it. He said that the Government imposed a protective duty of from ten to seventy per cent on foreign–made

articles, and that the American manufacturer consequently could sell his goods for a healthy sum. Thus an imported hat would, with duty, cost two guineas. The American manufacturer would make a hat for seventeen shillings and sell it for one pound fifteen. In these things, he said, lay the greatness of America and the effeteness of England. Competition between factory and factory kept the prices down to decent limits, but I was never to forget that this people were a rich people, not like the pauper Continentals, and that they enjoyed paying duties. To my weak intellect this seemed rather like juggling with counters. Everything that I have yet purchased costs about twice as much as it would in England, and when native–made is of inferior quality. Moreover, since these lines were first thought of I have visited a gentleman who owned a factory which used to produce things. He owned the factory still. Not a man was in it, but he was drawing a handsome income from a syndicate of firms for keeping it closed in order that it might not produce things. This man said that if protection were abandoned, a tide of pauper labour would flood the country, and as I looked at his factory I thought how entirely better it was to have no labour of any kind whatever, rather than face so horrible a future. Meantime, do you remember that this peculiar country enjoys paying money for value not received. I am an alien, and for the life of me cannot see why six shillings should be paid for eighteen–penny caps, or eight shillings for half–crown cigar–cases. When the country fills up to a decently populated level a few million people who are not aliens will be smitten with the same sort of blindness.

But my friend's assertion somehow thoroughly suited the grotesque ferocity of Chicago. See now and judge! In the village of Isser Jang on the road to Montgomery there be four *changar* women who winnow corn—some seventy bushels a year. Beyond their hut lives Puran Dass, the money–lender, who on good security lends as much as five thousand rupees in a year. Jowala Singh, the *lohar*, mends the village ploughs—some thirty, broken at the share, in three hundred and sixty–five days; and Hukm Chund, who is letter–writer and head of the little club under the travellers' tree, generally keeps the village posted in such gossip as the barber and the midwife have not yet made public property. Chicago husks and winnows her wheat by the million bushels, a hundred banks lend hundreds of millions of dollars in the year, and scores of factories turn out plough gear and machinery by steam. Scores of daily papers do work which Hukm Chund and the barber and the midwife perform, with due regard for public opinion, in the village of Isser Jang. So far as manufactures go, the difference between Chicago on the lake and Isser Jang on the Montgomery road is one of degree only, and not of kind. As far as the understanding of the uses of life goes Isser Jang, for all its seasonal

cholera, has the advantage over Chicago. Jowala Singh knows and takes care to avoid the three or four ghoul–haunted fields on the outskirts of the village; but he is not urged by millions of devils to run about all day in the sun and swear that his ploughshares are the best in the Punjab; nor does Puran Dass fly forth in a cart more than once or twice a year, and he knows, on a pinch, how to use the railway and the telegraph as well as any son of Israel in Chicago. But this is absurd. The East is not the West, and these men must continue to deal with the machinery of life, and to call it progress. Their very preachers dare not rebuke them. They gloss over the hunting for money and the twice–sharpened bitterness of Adam's curse by saying that such things dower a man with a larger range of thoughts and higher aspirations. They do not say: "Free yourself from your own slavery," but rather, "If you can possibly manage it, do not set quite so much store on the things of this world." And they do not know what the things of this world are.

I went off to see cattle killed by way of clearing my head, which, as you will perceive, was getting muddled. They say every Englishman goes to the Chicago stockyards. You shall find them about six miles from the city; and once having seen them will never forget the sight. As far as the eye can reach stretches a township of cattle–pens, cunningly divided into blocks so that the animals of any pen can be speedily driven out close to an inclined timber path which leads to an elevated covered way straddling high above the pens. These viaducts are two–storied. On the upper storey tramp the doomed cattle, stolidly for the most part. On the lower, with a scuffling of sharp hooves and multitudinous yells, run the pigs. The same end is appointed for each. Thus you will see the gangs of cattle waiting their turn—as they wait sometimes for days; and they need not be distressed by the sight of their fellows running about in the fear of death. All they know is that a man on horseback causes their next–door neighbours to move by means of a whip. Certain bars and fences are unshipped, and, behold, that crowd have gone up the mouth of a sloping tunnel and return no more. It is different with the pigs. They shriek back the news of the exodus to their friends, and a hundred pens skirl responsive. It was to the pigs I first addressed myself. Selecting a viaduct which was full of them, as I could hear though I could not see, I marked a sombre building whereto it ran, and went there, not unalarmed by stray cattle who had managed to escape from their proper quarters. A pleasant smell of brine warned me of what was coming. I entered the factory and found it full of pork in barrels, and on another storey more pork unbarrelled, and in a huge room, the halves of swine for whose use great lumps of ice were being pitched in at the window. That room was the mortuary chamber where the pigs lie for a little while in state

ere they begin their progress through such passages as kings may sometimes travel. Turning a corner and not noting an overhead arrangement of greased rail, wheel, and pulley, I ran into the arms of four eviscerated carcasses, all pure white and of a human aspect, being pushed by a man clad in vehement red. When I leaped aside, the floor was slippery under me. There was a flavour of farmyard in my nostrils and the shouting of a multitude in my ears. But there was no joy in that shouting! Twelve men stood in two lines—six a–side. Between them and overhead ran the railway of death that had nearly shunted me through the window. Each man carried a knife, the sleeves of his shirt were cut off at the elbows, and from bosom to heel he was blood–red. The atmosphere was stifling as a night in the Rains, by reason of the steam and the crowd. I climbed to the beginning of things and, perched upon a narrow beam, overlooked very nearly all the pigs ever bred in Wisconsin. They had just been shot out of the mouth of the viaduct and huddled together in a large pen. Thence they were flicked persuasively, a few at a time, into a smaller chamber, and there a man fixed tackle on their hinder legs so that they rose in the air suspended from the railway of death. Oh! it was then they shrieked and called on their mothers and made promises of amendment till the tackle–man punted them in their backs, and they slid head down into a brick–floored passage, very like a big kitchen sink that was blood–red. There awaited them a red man with a knife which he passed jauntily through their throats, and the full–voiced shriek became a sputter, and then a fall as of heavy tropical rain. The red man who was backed against the passage wall stood clear of the wildly kicking hoofs and passed his hand over his eyes, not from any feeling of compassion, but because the spurted blood was in his eyes, and he had barely time to stick the next arrival. Then that first stuck swine dropped, still kicking, into a great vat of boiling water, and spoke no more words, but wallowed in obedience to some unseen machinery, and presently came forth at the lower end of the vat and was heaved on the blades of a blunt paddle–wheel–thing which said, "Hough! Hough! Hough!" and skelped all the hair off him except what little a couple of men with knives could remove. Then he was again hitched by the heels to that said railway and passed down the line of the twelve men—each man with a knife—leaving with each man a certain amount of his individuality which was taken away in a wheel–barrow, and when he reached the last man he was very beautiful to behold, but immensely unstuffed and limp. Preponderance of individuality was ever a bar to foreign travel. That pig could have been in no case to visit you in India had he not parted with some of his most cherished notions.

The dissecting part impressed me not so much as the slaying.

They were so excessively alive, these pigs. And then they were so excessively dead, and the man in the dripping, clammy, hot passage did not seem to care, and ere the blood of such an one had ceased to foam on the floor, such another, and four friends with him, had shrieked and died. But a pig is only the Unclean animal—forbidden by the Prophet.

I was destined to make rather a queer discovery when I went over to the cattle–slaughter. All the buildings here were on a much larger scale, and there was no sound of trouble, but I could smell the salt reek of blood before I set foot in the place. The cattle did not come directly through the viaduct as the pigs had done. They debouched into a yard by the hundred, and they were big red brutes carrying much flesh. In the centre of that yard stood a red Texan steer with a headstall on his wicked head. No man controlled him. He was, so to speak, picking his teeth and whistling in an open byre of his own when the cattle arrived. As soon as the first one had fearfully quitted the viaduct, this red devil put his hands in his pockets and slouched across the yard, no man guiding him. Then he lowed something to the effect that he was the regularly appointed guide of the establishment and would show them round. They were country folk, but they knew how to behave; and so followed Judas some hundred strong, patiently, and with a look of bland wonder in their faces. I saw his broad back jogging in advance of them, up a lime–washed incline where I was forbidden to follow. Then a door shut, and in a minute back came Judas with the air of a virtuous plough–bullock and took up his place in his byre. Somebody laughed across the yard, but I heard no sound of cattle from the big brick building into which the mob had disappeared. Only Judas chewed the cud with a malignant satisfaction, and so I knew there was trouble, and ran round to the front of the factory and so entered and stood aghast.

Who takes count of the prejudices which we absorb through the skin by way of our surroundings? It was not the spectacle that impressed me. The first thought that almost spoke itself aloud was: "They are killing kine;" and it was a shock. The pigs were nobody's concern, but cattle—the brothers of the Cow, the Sacred Cow—were quite otherwise. The next time an M.P. tells me that India either Sultanises or Brahminises a man, I shall believe about half what he says. It is unpleasant to watch the slaughter of cattle when one has laughed at the notion for a few years. I could not see actually what was done in the first instance, because the row of stalls in which they lay was separated from me by fifty impassable feet of butchers and slung carcasses. All I know is that men swung open the doors of a stall as occasion required, and there lay two steers already stunned, and breathing heavily. These two they pole–axed, and half raising them by

tackle they cut their throats. Two men skinned each carcase, somebody cut off the head, and in half a minute more the overhead rail carried two sides of beef to their appointed place. There was clamour enough in the operating room, but from the waiting cattle, invisible on the other side of the line of pens, never a sound. They went to their death, trusting Judas, without a word. They were slain at the rate of five a minute, and if the pig men were spattered with blood, the cow butchers were bathed in it. The blood ran in muttering gutters. There was no place for hand or foot that was not coated with thicknesses of dried blood, and the stench of it in the nostrils bred fear.

And then the same merciful Providence that has showered good things on my path throughout sent me an embodiment of the city of Chicago, so that I might remember it forever. Women come sometimes to see the slaughter, as they would come to see the slaughter of men. And there entered that vermilion hall a young woman of large mould, with brilliantly scarlet lips, and heavy eyebrows, and dark hair that came in a "widow's peak" on the forehead. She was well and healthy and alive, and she was dressed in flaming red and black, and her feet (know you that the feet of American women are like unto the feet of fairies?) her feet, I say, were cased in red leather shoes. She stood in a patch of sunlight, the red blood under her shoes, the vivid carcasses packed round her, a bullock bleeding its life away not six feet away from her, and the death factory roaring all round her. She looked curiously, with hard, bold eyes, and was not ashamed.

Then said I: "This is a special Sending. I have seen the City of Chicago." And I went away to get peace and rest.

No. XXXVI

How I Found Peace at Musquash on the Monongahela - "Prince, Blown by Many a Western Breeze Our Vessels Greet You Treasure-laden; We Send Them All--but Best of These a Free and Frank Young Yankee Maiden."

It is a mean thing and an unhandsome to "do" a continent in five–hundred–mile jumps. But after those swine and bullocks at Chicago I felt that complete change of air would be good. The United States at present hinge in or about Chicago, as a double–leaved screen hinges. To be sure, the tiny New England States call a trip to Pennsylvania "going west," but the larger–minded citizen seems to reckon his longitude from Chicago. Twenty years hence the centre of population —that shaded square on the census map—will have shifted, men say, far west of Chicago. Twenty years later it will be on the Pacific slope. Twenty years after that America will begin to crowd up, and there will be some trouble. People will demand manufactured goods for their reduced–establishment households at the cheapest possible rates, and the cry that the land is rich enough to afford protection will cease with a great abruptness. At present it is the farmer who pays most dearly for the luxury of high prices. In the old days, when the land was fresh and there was plenty of it and it cropped like the garden of Eden, he did not mind paying. Now there is not so much free land, and the old acres are needing stimulants, which cost money, and the farmer, who pays for everything, is beginning to ask questions. Also the great American nation, which individually never shuts a door behind its noble self, very seldom attempts to put back anything that it has taken from Nature's shelves. It grabs all it can and moves on. But the moving–on is nearly finished and the grabbing must stop, and then the Federal Government will have to establish a Woods and Forests Department the like of which was never seen in the world before. And all the people who have been accustomed to hack, mangle, and burn timber as they please will object, with shots and protestations, to this infringement of their rights. The nigger will breed bounteously, and *he* will have to be reckoned with; and the manufacturer will have to be contented with smaller profits, and *he* will have to be reckoned with; and the railways will no longer rule the countries through which they run, and they will have to be reckoned with. And nobody will approve of it in the least.

Yes; it will be a spectacle for all the world to watch, this big, slashing colt of a nation, that has got off with a flying start on a freshly littered course, being pulled back to the ruck by that very mutton–fisted jockey Necessity. There will be excitement in America

when a few score millions of "sovereigns" discover that what they considered the outcome of their own Government is but the rapidly diminishing bounty of Nature; and that if they want to get on comfortably they must tackle every single problem from labour to finance humbly, without gasconade, and afresh. But at present they look "that all the to–morrows shall be as to–day," and if you argue with them they say that the Democratic Idea will keep things going. They believe in that Idea, and the less well–informed fortify themselves in their belief by curious assertions as to the despotism that exists in England. This is pure provincialism, of course; but it is very funny to listen to, especially when you compare the theory with the practice (pistol, chiefly) as proven in the newspapers. I have striven to find out where the central authority of the land lies. It isn't at Washington, because the Federal Government can't do anything to the States save run the mail and collect a Federal tax or two. It isn't in the States, because the townships can do as they like; and it isn't in the townships, because these are bossed by alien voters or rings of patriotic homebred citizens. And it certainly is not in the citizens, because they are governed and coerced by despotic power of public opinion as represented by their papers, preachers, or local society. I found one man who told me that if anything went wrong in this huge congress of kings,—if there was a split or an upheaval or a smash,—the people in detail would be subject to the Idea of the sovereign people in mass. This is a survival from the Civil War, when, you remember, the people in a majority did with guns and swords slay and wound the people in detail. All the same, the notion seems very much like the worship by the savage of the unloaded rifle as it leans against the wall.

But the men and women set Us an example in patriotism. They believe in their land and its future, and its honour, and its glory, and they are not ashamed to say so. From the largest to the least runs this same proud, passionate conviction to which I take off my hat and for which I love them. An average English householder seems to regard his country as an abstraction to supply him with policemen and fire–brigades. The cockney cad cannot understand what the word means. The bloomin' toffs he knows, and the law, and the soldiers that supply him with a spectacle in the Parks; but he would laugh in your face at the notion of any duty being owed by himself to his land. Pick an American of the second generation anywhere you please—from the cab–rank, the porter's room, or the plough–tail,—'specially the plough–tail,—and that man will make you understand in five minutes that he understands what manner of thing his Republic is. He might laugh at a law that didn't suit his convenience, draw your eye–teeth in a bargain, and applaud 'cuteness on the outer verge of swindling: but

you should hear him stand up and sing:—

> "My country 'tis of thee,
> Sweet land of liberty,
> Of thee I sing!"

I have heard a few thousand of them engaged in that employment. I respect him. There is too much Romeo and too little balcony about our National Anthem. With the American article it is all balcony. There must be born a poet who shall give the English *the* song of their own, own country—which is to say, of about half the world. Remains then only to compose the greatest song of all—The Saga of the Anglo–Saxon all round the earth—a pæan that shall combine the terrible slow swing of the *Battle Hymn of the Republic* (which, if you know not, get chanted to you) with *Britannia needs no Bulwarks*, the skirl of the *British Grenadiers* with that perfect quickstep, *Marching through Georgia*, and at the end the wail of the *Dead March*. For We, even We who share the earth between us as no gods have ever shared it, we also are mortal in the matter of our single selves. Will any one take the contract?

It was with these rambling notions that I arrived at the infinite peace of the tiny township of Musquash on the Monongahela River. The clang and tumult of Chicago belonged to another world. Imagine a rolling, wooded, English landscape, under softest of blue skies, dotted at three–mile intervals with fat little, quiet little villages, or aggressive little manufacturing towns that the trees and the folds of the hills mercifully prevented from betraying their presence. The golden–rod blazed in the pastures against the green of the mulleins, and the cows picked their way home through the twisted paths between the blackberry bushes. All summer was on the orchards, and the apples—such apples as we dream of when we eat the woolly imitations of Kashmir—were ripe and toothsome. It was good to lie in a hammock with half–shut eyes, and, in the utter stillness, to hear the apples dropping from the trees, and the tinkle of the cowbells as the cows walked statelily down the main road of the village. Everybody in that restful place seemed to have just as much as he wanted; a house with all comfortable appliances, a big or little verandah wherein to spend the day, a neatly shaved garden with a wild wealth of flowers, some cows, and an orchard. Everybody knew everybody else intimately, and what they did not know, the local daily paper—a daily for a village of twelve hundred people!—supplied. There was a court–house where justice was done, and a jail where some most enviable prisoners lived, and there were four or five churches of four or five denominations. Also it was impossible to buy openly any liquor in that

little paradise. But—and this is a very serious *but*—you could by procuring a medical certificate get strong drinks from the chemist. That is the drawback of prohibition. It makes a man who wants a drink a shirker and a contriver, which things are not good for the soul of a man, and presently, 'specially if he be young, causes him to believe that he may just as well be hanged for a sheep as for a lamb; and the end of that young man is not pretty. Nothing except a rattling fall will persuade an average colt that a fence is not meant to be jumped over; whereas if he be turned out into the open he learns to carry himself with discretion. One heard a good deal of this same dread of drink in Musquash, and even the maidens seemed to know too much about its effects upon certain unregenerate youths, who, if they had been once made thoroughly, effectually, and persistently drunk—with a tepid brandy and soda thrust before their goose–fleshed noses on the terrible Next Morning—would perhaps have seen the futility of their ways. It was a sin by village canons to imbibe lager, though—*experto crede*—you can get dropsy on that stuff long before you can get drunk. "But what man knows his mind?" Besides, it was all their own affair.

The little community seemed to be as self–contained as an Indian village. Had the rest of the land sunk under the sea, Musquash would have gone on sending its sons to school in order to make them "good citizens," which is the constant prayer of the true American father, settling its own road–making, local cesses, town–lot arbitrations, and internal government by ballot and vote and due respect to the voices of the headmen (which is the salvation of the ballot), until such time as all should take their places in the cemetery appointed for their faith. Here were Americans and no aliens—men ruling themselves by themselves and for themselves and their wives and their children—in peace, order, and decency.

But what went straightest to this heart, though they did not know it, was that they were Methody folk for the most part—ay, Methody as ever trod a Yorkshire Moor, or drove on a Sunday to some chapel of the Faith in the Dales. The old Methody talk was there, with the discipline whereby the souls of the Just are, sometimes to their intense vexation, made perfect on this earth in order that they may "take out their letters and live and die in good standing." If you don't know the talk, you won't know what that means. The discipline, or dis*cip*line, is no thing to be trifled with, and its working among a congregation depends entirely upon the tact, humanity, and sympathy of the leader who works it. He, knowing what youth's desires are, can turn the soul in the direction of good, gently, instead of wrenching it savagely towards the right path only to see it break away quivering and scared. The arm of the Disc*ip*line is long. A maiden told me, as a new and

strange fact and one that would interest a foreigner, of a friend of hers who had once been admonished by some elders somewhere—not in Musquash—for the heinous crime of dancing. She, the friend, did not in the least like it. She would not. Can't you imagine the delightful results of a formal wigging administered by a youngish and austere elder who was not accustomed to make allowances for the natural dancing instincts of the young of the human animal? The hot irons that are held forth to scare may also sear, as those who have ever lain under an unfortunate exposition of the old Faith can attest.

But it was all immensely interesting—the absolutely fresh, wholesome, sweet life that paid due reverence to the things of the next world, but took good care to get enough tennis in the cool of the evening; that concerned itself as honestly and thoroughly with the daily round, the trivial task (and that same task is anything but trivial when you are "helped" by an American "help") as with the salvation of the soul. I had the honour of meeting in the flesh, even as Miss Louisa Alcott drew them, Meg and Joe and Beth and Amy, whom you ought to know. There was no affectation of concealment in their lives who had nothing to conceal. There were many "little women" in that place, because, even as is the case in England, the boys had gone out to seek their fortunes. Some were working in the thundering, clanging cities, others had removed to the infinite West, and others had disappeared in the languid, lazy South; and the maidens waited their return, which is the custom of maidens all over the world. Then the boys would come back in the soft sunlight, attired in careful raiment, their tongues cleansed of evil words and discourtesy. They had just come to call—bless their carefully groomed heads so they had,—and the maidens in white dresses glimmered like ghosts on the stoop and received them according to their merits. Mamma had nothing to do with this, nor papa either, for he was down–town trying to drive reason into the head of a land surveyor; and all along the shaded, lazy, intimate street you heard the garden–gates click and clash, as the mood of the man varied, and bursts of pleasant laughter where three or four—be sure the white muslins were among them,—discussed a picnic past or a buggy–drive to come. Then the couples went their ways and talked together till the young men had to go at last on account of the trains, and all trooped joyously down to the station and thought no harm of it. And, indeed, why should they? From her fifteenth year the American maiden moves among "the boys" as a sister among brothers. They are her servants to take her out riding,—which is driving,—to give her flowers and candy. The last two items are expensive, and this is good for the young man, as teaching him to value friendship that costs a little in cash and may necessitate economy on the cigar side. As to the maiden, she is taught to respect

herself, that her fate is in her own hands, and that she is the more stringently bound by the very measure of the liberty so freely accorded to her. Wherefore, in her own language, "she has a lovely time" with about two or three hundred boys who have sisters of their own, and a very accurate perception that if they were unworthy of their trust a syndicate of other boys would probably pass them into a world where there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage. And so time goes till the maiden knows the other side of the house,—knows that a man is not a demi–god nor a mysteriously veiled monster, but an average, egotistical, vain, gluttonous, but on the whole companionable, sort of person, to be soothed, fed, and managed—knowledge that does not come to her sister in England till after a few years of matrimony. And then she makes her choice. The Golden Light touches eyes that are full of comprehension; but the light is golden none the less, for she makes just the same sweet, irrational choices that an English girl does. With this advantage: she knows a little more, has experience in entertaining, insight into the businesses, employ, and hobbies of men, gathered from countless talks with the boys, and talks with the other girls who find time at those mysterious conclaves to discuss what Tom, Ted, Stuke, or Jack have been doing. Thus it happens that she is a companion, in the fullest sense of the word, of the man she weds, zealous for the interest of the firm, to be consulted in time of stress and to be called upon for help and sympathy in time of danger. Pleasant it is that one heart should beat for you; but it is better when the head above that heart has been thinking hard on your behalf, and when the lips, that are also very pleasant to kiss, give wise counsel.

When the American maiden—I speak now for the rank and file of that noble army—is once married, why, it is finished. She has had her lovely time. It may have been five, seven, or ten years according to circumstances. She abdicates promptly with startling speed, and her place knows her no more except as with her husband. The Queen is dead, or looking after the house. This same household work seems to be the thing that ages the American woman. She is infamously "helped" by the Irish trollop and the negress alike. It is not fair upon her, because she has to do three parts of the housework herself, and in dry, nerve–straining air the "chores" are a burden. Be thankful, O my people, for Mauz Baksh, Kadir Baksh, and the *ayah* while they are with you. They are twice as handy as the unkempt slatterns of the furnished apartments to which you will return, Commissioners though you be; and five times as clever as the Amelia Araminta Rebellia Secessia Jackson (coloured) under whose ineptitude and insolence the young American housewife groans. But all this is far enough from peaceful, placid Musquash and its boundless cordiality, its simple,

genuine hospitality, and its—what's the French word that just covers all?—*gra—gracieuseness*, isn't it? Oh, be good to an American wherever you meet him. Put him up for the club, and he will hold you listening till three in the morning; give him the best tent, and the gram–fed mutton. I have incurred a debt of salt that I can never repay, but do you return it piecemeal to any of that Nation, and the account will be on my head till our paths in the world cross again. He drinks iced water just as we do; but he doesn't quite like our cigars.

And how shall I finish the tale? Would it interest you to learn of the picnics in the hot, still woods that overhang the Monongahela, when those idiotic American buggies that can't turn round got stuck among the brambles and all but capsized; of boating in the blazing sun on the river that but a little time before had cast at the feet of the horrified village the corpses of the Johnstown tragedy? I saw one, only one, remnant of that terrible wreck. He had been a minister. House, church, congregation, wife, and children had been swept away from him in one night of terror. He had no employment; he could have employed himself at nothing; but God had been very good to him. He sat in the sun and smiled a little weakly. It was in his poor blurred mind that something had happened—he was not sure what it was, but undoubtedly something had occurred. One could only pray that the light would never return.

But there be many pictures on my mind. Of a huge manufacturing city of three hundred thousand souls lighted and warmed by natural gas, so that the great valley full of flaming furnaces sent up no smoke wreaths to the clear sky. Of Musquash itself lighted by the same mysterious agency, flares of gas eight feet long, roaring day and night at the corners of the grass–grown streets because it wasn't worth while to turn them out; of fleets of coal–flats being hauled down the river on an interminable journey to St. Louis; of factories nestling in woods where all the axe–handles and shovels in the world seemed to be manufactured daily; and last, of that quaint forgotten German community, the Brotherhood of Perpetual Separation, who founded themselves when the State was yet young and land cheap, and are now dying out because they will neither marry nor give in marriage and their recruits are very few. The advance in the value of land has almost smothered these poor old people in a golden affluence that they never desired. They live in a little village where the houses are built old Dutch fashion, with their front doors away from the road, and cobbled paths all about. The cloistered peace of Musquash is a metropolitan riot beside the hush of that village. And there is, too, a love–tale tucked away among the flowers. It has taken seventy years in the telling, for the brother and sister loved each other well, but they loved their duty to the brotherhood more. So they have lived and still

do live, seeing each other daily, and separated for all time. Any trouble that might have been is altogether wiped out of their faces, which are as calm as those of very little children. To the uninitiated those constant ones resemble extremely old people in garments of absurd cut. But they love each other, and that seems to bring one back quite naturally to the girls and the boys in Musquash. The boys were nice boys—graduates of Yale of course; you mustn't mention Harvard here—but none the less skilled in business, in stocks and shares, the boring for oil, and the sale of everything that can be sold by one sinner to another. Skilled, too, in baseball, big–shouldered, with straight eyes and square chins—but not above occasional diversion and mild orgies. They will make good citizens and possess the earth, and eventually wed one of the nice white muslin dresses. There are worse things in this world than being "one of the boys" in Musquash.

No. XXXVII

An Interview With Mark Twain

You are a contemptible lot, over yonder. Some of you are Commissioners, and some Lieutenant–Governors, and some have the V. C., and a few are privileged to walk about the Mall arm in arm with the Viceroy; but *I* have seen Mark Twain this golden morning, have shaken his hand, and smoked a cigar—no, two cigars—with him, and talked with him for more than two hours! Understand clearly that I do not despise you; indeed, I don't. I am only very sorry for you, from the Viceroy downward. To soothe your envy and to prove that I still regard you as my equals, I will tell you all about it.

They said in Buffalo that he was in Hartford, Conn.; and again they said "perchance he is gone upon a journey to Portland"; and a big, fat drummer vowed that he knew the great man intimately, and that Mark was spending the summer in Europe—which information so upset me that I embarked upon the wrong train, and was incontinently turned out by the conductor three–quarters of a mile from the station, amid the wilderness of railway tracks. Have you ever, encumbered with great–coat and valise, tried to dodge diversely–minded locomotives when the sun was shining in your eyes? But I forgot that you have not seen Mark Twain, you people of no account!

Saved from the jaws of the cow–catcher, me wandering devious a stranger met.

"Elmira is the place. Elmira in the State of New York—this State, not two hundred miles away;" and he added, perfectly unnecessarily, "Slide, Kelley, slide."

I slid on the West Shore line, I slid till midnight, and they dumped me down at the door of a frowzy hotel in Elmira. Yes, they knew all about "that man Clemens," but reckoned he was not in town; had gone East somewhere. I had better possess my soul in patience till the morrow, and then dig up the "man Clemens'" brother–in–law, who was interested in coal.

The idea of chasing half a dozen relatives in addition to Mark Twain up and down a city of thirty thousand inhabitants kept me awake. Morning revealed Elmira, whose streets were desolated by railway tracks, and whose suburbs were given up to the manufacture of door–sashes and window–frames. It was surrounded by pleasant, fat, little hills, rimmed with timber and topped with cultivation. The Chemung River flowed generally up and down the town, and had just finished flooding a few of the main streets.

The hotel–man and the telephone–man assured me that the much–desired brother–in–law was out of town, and no one seemed to

know where "the man Clemens" abode. Later on I discovered that he had not summered in that place for more than nineteen seasons, and so was comparatively a new arrival.

A friendly policeman volunteered the news that he had seen Twain or "some one very like him" driving a buggy the day before. This gave me a delightful sense of nearness. Fancy living in a town where you could see the author of *Tom Sawyer*, or "some one very like him," jolting over the pavements in a buggy!

"He lives out yonder at East Hill," said the policeman; "three miles from here."

Then the chase began—in a hired hack, up an awful hill, where sunflowers blossomed by the roadside, and crops waved, and *Harper's Magazine* cows stood in eligible and commanding attitudes knee–deep in clover, all ready to be transferred to photogravure. The great man must have been persecuted by outsiders aforetime, and fled up the hill for refuge.

Presently the driver stopped at a miserable, little, white wood shanty, and demanded "Mister Clemens."

"I know he's a big–bug and all that," he explained, "but you can never tell what sort of notions those sort of men take into their heads to live in, anyways."

There rose up a young lady who was sketching thistle–tops and goldenrod, amid a plentiful supply of both, and set the pilgrimage on the right path.

"It's a pretty Gothic house on the left–hand side a little way farther on."

"Gothic h—," said the driver. "Very few of the city hacks take this drive, specially if they know they are coming out here," and he glared at me savagely.

It was a very pretty house, anything but Gothic, clothed with ivy, standing in a very big compound, and fronted by a verandah full of chairs and hammocks. The roof of the verandah was a trellis–work of creepers, and the sun peeping through moved on the shining boards below.

Decidedly this remote place was an ideal one for work, if a man could work among these soft airs and the murmur of the long–eared crops.

Appeared suddenly a lady used to dealing with rampageous outsiders. "Mr. Clemens has just walked down–town. He is at his brother–in–law's house."

Then he was within shouting distance, after all, and the chase had not been in vain. With speed I fled, and the driver, skidding the wheel and swearing audibly, arrived at the bottom of that hill without accidents. It was in the pause that followed between ringing the

brother–in–law's bell and getting an answer that it occurred to me for the first time Mark Twain might possibly have other engagements than the entertainment of escaped lunatics from India, be they never so full of admiration. And in another man's house—anyhow, what had I come to do or say? Suppose the drawing–room should be full of people,—suppose a baby were sick, how was I to explain that I only wanted to shake hands with him?

Then things happened somewhat in this order. A big, darkened drawing–room; a huge chair; a man with eyes, a mane of grizzled hair, a brown mustache covering a mouth as delicate as a woman's, a strong, square hand shaking mine, and the slowest, calmest, levellest voice in all the world saying:—

"Well, you think you owe me something, and you've come to tell me so. That's what I call squaring a debt handsomely."

"Piff!" from a cob–pipe (I always said that a Missouri meerschaum was the best smoking in the world), and, behold! Mark Twain had curled himself up in the big armchair, and I was smoking reverently, as befits one in the presence of his superior.

The thing that struck me first was that he was an elderly man; yet, after a minute's thought, I perceived that it was otherwise, and in five minutes, the eyes looking at me, I saw that the grey hair was an accident of the most trivial. He was quite young. I was shaking his hand. I was smoking his cigar, and I was hearing him talk—this man I had learned to love and admire fourteen thousand miles away.

Reading his books, I had striven to get an idea of his personality, and all my preconceived notions were wrong and beneath the reality. Blessed is the man who finds no disillusion when he is brought face to face with a revered writer. That was a moment to be remembered; the landing of a twelve–pound salmon was nothing to it. I had hooked Mark Twain, and he was treating me as though under certain circumstances I might be an equal.

About this time I became aware that he was discussing the copyright question. Here, so far as I remember, is what he said. Attend to the words of the oracle through this unworthy medium transmitted. You will never be able to imagine the long, slow surge of the drawl, and the deadly gravity of the countenance, the quaint pucker of the body, one foot thrown over the arm of the chair, the yellow pipe clinched in one corner of the mouth, and the right hand casually caressing the square chin:—

"Copyright? Some men have morals, and some men have—other things. I presume a publisher is a man. He is not born. He is created—by circumstances. Some publishers have morals. Mine have. They pay me for the English productions of my books. When you hear men talking of Bret Harte's works and other works and my books being

pirated, ask them to be sure of their facts. I think they'll find the books are paid for. It was ever thus.

"I remember an unprincipled and formidable publisher. Perhaps he's dead now. He used to take my short stories—I can't call it steal or pirate them. It was beyond these things altogether. He took my stories one at a time and made a book of it. If I wrote an essay on dentistry or theology or any little thing of that kind—just an essay that long (he indicated half an inch on his finger), any sort of essay—that publisher would amend and improve my essay.

"He would get another man to write some more to it or cut it about exactly as his needs required. Then he would publish a book called *Dentistry by Mark Twain*, that little essay and some other things not mine added. Theology would make another book, and so on. I do not consider that fair. It's an insult. But he's dead now, I think. I didn't kill him.

"There is a great deal of nonsense talked about international copyright. The proper way to treat a copyright is to make it exactly like real–estate in every way.

"It will settle itself under these conditions. If Congress were to bring in a law that a man's life was not to extend over a hundred and sixty years, somebody would laugh. That law wouldn't concern anybody. The man would be out of the jurisdiction of the court. A term of years in copyright comes to exactly the same thing. No law can make a book live or cause it to die before the appointed time.

"Tottletown, Cal., was a new town, with a population of three thousand—banks, fire–brigade, brick buildings, and all the modern improvements. It lived, it flourished, and it disappeared. To–day no man can put his foot on any remnant of Tottletown, Cal. It's dead. London continues to exist. Bill Smith, author of a book read for the next year or so, is real–estate in Tottletown. William Shakespeare, whose works are extensively read, is real–estate in London. Let Bill Smith, equally with Mr. Shakespeare now deceased, have as complete a control over his copyright as he would over his real–estate. Let him gamble it away, drink it away, or—give it to the church. Let his heirs and assigns treat it in the same manner.

"Every now and again I go up to Washington, sitting on a board to drive that sort of view into Congress. Congress takes its arguments against international copyright delivered ready made, and—Congress isn't very strong. I put the real–estate view of the case before one of the Senators.

"He said: 'Suppose a man has written a book that will live for ever?'

"I said: 'Neither you nor I will ever live to see that man, but we'll assume it. What then?'

"He said: 'I want to protect the world against that man's heirs and assigns, working under your theory.'

"I said: 'You think that all the world has no commercial sense. The book that will live for ever can't be artificially kept up at inflated prices. There will always be very expensive editions of it and cheap ones issuing side by side.'

"Take the case of Sir Walter Scott's novels," Mark Twain continued, turning to me. "When the copyright notes protected them, I bought editions as expensive as I could afford, because I liked them. At the same time the same firm were selling editions that a cat might buy. They had their real estate, and not being fools, recognised that one portion of the plot could be worked as a gold mine, another as a vegetable garden, and another as a marble quarry. Do you see?"

What I saw with the greatest clearness was Mark Twain being forced to fight for the simple proposition that a man has as much right to the work of his brains (think of the heresy of it!) as to the labour of his hands. When the old lion roars, the young whelps growl. I growled assentingly, and the talk ran on from books in general to his own in particular.

Growing bold, and feeling that I had a few hundred thousand folk at my back, I demanded whether Tom Sawyer married Judge Thatcher's daughter and whether we were ever going to hear of Tom Sawyer as a man.

"I haven't decided," quoth Mark Twain, getting up, filling his pipe, and walking up and down the room in his slippers. "I have a notion of writing the sequel to *Tom Sawyer* in two ways. In one I would make him rise to great honour and go to Congress, and in the other I should hang him. Then the friends and enemies of the book could take their choice."

Here I lost my reverence completely, and protested against any theory of the sort, because, to me at least, Tom Sawyer was real.

"Oh, he *is* real," said Mark Twain. "He's all the boy that I have known or recollect; but that would be a good way of ending the book"; then, turning round, "because, when you come to think of it, neither religion, training, nor education avails anything against the force of circumstances that drive a man. Suppose we took the next four and twenty years of Tom Sawyer's life, and gave a little joggle to the circumstances that controlled him. He would, logically and according to the joggle, turn out a rip or an angel."

"Do you believe that, then?"

"I think so. Isn't it what you call Kismet?"

"Yes; but don't give him two joggles and show the result, because he isn't your property any more. He belongs to us."

He laughed—a large, wholesome laugh—and this began a

dissertation on the rights of a man to do what he liked with his own creations, which being a matter of purely professional interest, I will mercifully omit.

Returning to the big chair, he, speaking of truth and the like in literature, said that an autobiography was the one work in which a man, against his own will and in spite of his utmost striving to the contrary, revealed himself in his true light to the world.

"A good deal of your life on the Mississippi is autobiographical, isn't it?" I asked.

"As near as it can be—when a man is writing to a book and about himself. But in genuine autobiography, I believe it is impossible for a man to tell the truth about himself or to avoid impressing the reader with the truth about himself.

"I made an experiment once. I got a friend of mine—a man painfully given to speak the truth on all occasions—a man who wouldn't dream of telling a lie—and I made him write his autobiography for his own amusement and mine. He did it. The manuscript would have made an octavo volume, but—good, honest man that he was—in every single detail of his life that I knew about he turned out, on paper, a formidable liar. He could not help himself.

"It is not in human nature to write the truth about itself. None the less the reader gets a general impression from an autobiography whether the man is a fraud or a good man. The reader can't give his reasons any more than a man can explain why a woman struck him as being lovely when he doesn't remember her hair, eyes, teeth, or figure. And the impression that the reader gets is a correct one."

"Do you ever intend to write an autobiography?"

"If I do, it will be as other men have done—with the most earnest desire to make myself out to be the better man in every little business that has been to my discredit; and I shall fail, like the others, to make my readers believe anything except the truth."

This naturally led to a discussion on conscience. Then said Mark Twain, and his words are mighty and to be remembered:—

"Your conscience is a nuisance. A conscience is like a child. If you pet it and play with it and let it have everything that it wants, it becomes spoiled and intrudes on all your amusements and most of your griefs. Treat your conscience as you would treat anything else. When it is rebellious, spank it—be severe with it, argue with it, prevent it from coming to play with you at all hours, and you will secure a good conscience; that is to say, a properly trained one. A spoiled one simply destroys all the pleasure in life. I think I have reduced mine to order. At least, I haven't heard from it for some time. Perhaps I have killed it from over–severity. It's wrong to kill a child, but, in spite of all I have said, a conscience differs from a child in

many ways. Perhaps it's best when it's dead."

Here he told me a little—such things as a man may tell a stranger—of his early life and upbringing, and in what manner he had been influenced for good by the example of his parents. He spoke always through his eyes, a light under the heavy eyebrows; anon crossing the room with a step as light as a girl's, to show me some book or other; then resuming his walk up and down the room, puffing at the cob pipe. I would have given much for nerve enough to demand the gift of that pipe—value, five cents when new. I understood why certain savage tribes ardently desired the liver of brave men slain in combat. That pipe would have given me, perhaps, a hint of his keen insight into the souls of men. But he never laid it aside within stealing reach.

Once, indeed, he put his hand on my shoulder. It was an investiture of the Star of India, blue silk, trumpets, and diamond–studded jewel, all complete. If hereafter, in the changes and chances of this mortal life, I fall to cureless ruin, I will tell the superintendent of the workhouse that Mark Twain once put his hand on my shoulder; and he shall give me a room to myself and a double allowance of paupers' tobacco.

"I never read novels myself," said he, "except when the popular persecution forces me to—when people plague me to know what I think of the last book that every one is reading."

"And how did the latest persecution affect you?"

"Robert?" said he, interrogatively.

I nodded.

"I read it, of course, for the workmanship. That made me think I had neglected novels too long—that there might be a good many books as graceful in style somewhere on the shelves; so I began a course of novel reading. I have dropped it now; it did not amuse me. But as regards Robert, the effect on me was exactly as though a singer of street ballads were to hear excellent music from a church organ. I didn't stop to ask whether the music was legitimate or necessary. I listened, and I liked what I heard. I am speaking of the grace and beauty of the style."

"You see," he went on, "every man has his private opinion about a book. But that is my private opinion. If I had lived in the beginning of things, I should have looked around the township to see what popular opinion thought of the murder of Abel before I openly condemned Cain. I should have had my private opinion, of course, but I shouldn't have expressed it until I had felt the way. You have my private opinion about that book. I don't know what my public ones are exactly. They won't upset the earth."

He recurled himself into the chair and talked of other things.

"I spend nine months of the year at Hartford. I have long ago

satisfied myself that there is no hope of doing much work during those nine months. People come in and call. They call at all hours, about everything in the world. One day I thought I would keep a list of interruptions. It began this way:—

"A man came and would see no one but Mr. Clemens. He was an agent for photogravure reproductions of Salon pictures. I very seldom use Salon pictures in my books.

"After that man another man, who refused to see any one but Mr. Clemens, came to make me write to Washington about something. I saw him. I saw a third man, then a fourth. By this time it was noon. I had grown tired of keeping the list. I wished to rest.

"But the fifth man was the only one of the crowd with a card of his own. He sent up his card. 'Ben Koontz, Hannibal, Mo.' I was raised in Hannibal. Ben was an old schoolmate of mine. Consequently I threw the house wide open and rushed with both hands out at a big, fat, heavy man, who was not the Ben I had ever known—nor anything like him.

"'But *is* it you, Ben?' I said. 'You've altered in the last thousand years.'

"The fat man said: 'Well, I'm not Koontz exactly, but I met him down in Missouri, and he told me to be sure and call on you, and he gave me his card, and'—here he acted the little scene for my benefit—'if you can wait a minute till I can get out the circulars—I'm not Koontz exactly, but I'm travelling with the fullest line of rods you ever saw.'"

"And what happened?" I asked breathlessly.

"I shut–the door. He was not Ben Koontz—exactly—not my old school–fellow, but I had shaken him by both hands in love, and … I had been bearded by a lightning–rod man in my own house.

"As I was saying, I do very little work in Hartford. I come here for three months every year, and I work four or five hours a day in a study down the garden of that little house on the hill. Of course, I do not object to two or three interruptions. When a man is in the full swing of his work these little things do not affect him. Eight or ten or twenty interruptions retard composition."

I was burning to ask him all manner of impertinent questions, as to which of his works he himself preferred, and so forth; but, standing in awe of his eyes, I dared not. He spoke on, and I listened, grovelling.

It was a question of mental equipment that was on the carpet, and I am still wondering whether he meant what he said.

"Personally I never care for fiction or story–books. What I like to read about are facts and statistics of any kind. If they are only facts about the raising of radishes, they interest me. Just now, for instance, before you came in"—he pointed to an encyclopædia on the shelves

—"I was reading an article about 'Mathematics.' Perfectly pure mathematics.

"My own knowledge of mathematics stops at 'twelve times twelve,' but I enjoyed that article immensely. I didn't understand a word of it: but facts, or what a man believes to be facts, are always delightful. That mathematical fellow believed in his facts. So do I. Get your facts first, and"—the voice dies away to an almost inaudible drone—"then you can distort 'em as much as you please."

Bearing this precious advice in my bosom, I left; the great man assuring me with gentle kindness that I had not interrupted him in the least. Once outside the door, I yearned to go back and ask some questions—it was easy enough to think of them now—but his time was his own, though his books belonged to me.

I should have ample time to look back to that meeting across the graves of the days. But it was sad to think of the things he had not spoken about.

In San Francisco the men of *The Call* told me many legends of Mark's apprenticeship in their paper five and twenty years ago; how he was a reporter delightfully incapable of reporting according to the needs of the day. He preferred, so they said, to coil himself into a heap and meditate until the last minute. Then he would produce copy bearing no sort of relationship to his legitimate work—copy that made the editor swear horribly, and the readers of *The Call* ask for more.

I should like to have heard Mark's version of that, with some stories of his joyous and variegated past. He has been journeyman printer (in those days he wandered from the banks of the Missouri even to Philadelphia), pilot cub and full–blown pilot, soldier of the South (that was for three weeks only), private secretary to a Lieutenant–Governor of Nevada (that displeased him), miner, editor, special correspondent in the Sandwich Islands, and the Lord only knows what else. If so experienced a man could by any means be made drunk, it would be a glorious thing to fill him up with composite liquors, and, in the language of his own country, "let him retrospect." But these eyes will never see that orgy fit for the gods!

Part III
The City of Dreadful Night

Chapter I

Jan.-feb., 1888 - A Real Live City

We are all backwoodsmen and barbarians together—we others dwelling beyond the Ditch, in the outer darkness of the Mofussil. There are no such things as commissioners and heads of departments in the world, and there is only one city in India. Bombay is too green, too pretty, and too stragglesome; and Madras died ever so long ago. Let us take off our hats to Calcutta, the many–sided, the smoky, the magnificent, as we drive in over the Hugli Bridge in the dawn of a still February morning. We have left India behind us at Howrah Station, and now we enter foreign parts. No, not wholly foreign. Say rather too familiar.

All men of a certain age know the feeling of caged irritation—an illustration in the *Graphic*, a bar of music or the light words of a friend from home may set it ablaze—that comes from the knowledge of our lost heritage of London. At Home they, the other men, our equals, have at their disposal all that Town can supply—the roar of the streets, the lights, the music, the pleasant places, the millions of their own kind, and a wilderness full of pretty, fresh–coloured Englishwomen, theatres and restaurants. It is their right. They accept it as such, and even affect to look upon it with contempt. And we—we have nothing except the few amusements that we painfully build up for ourselves—the dolorous dissipations of gymkhanas where every one knows everybody else, or the chastened intoxication of dances where all engagements are booked, in ink, ten days ahead, and where everybody's antecedents are as patent as his or her method of waltzing. We have been deprived of our inheritance. The men at home are enjoying it all, not knowing how fair and rich it is, and we at the most can only fly westward for a few months and gorge what, properly speaking, should take seven or eight or ten luxurious years. That is the lost heritage of London; and the knowledge of the forfeiture, wilful or forced, comes to most men at times and seasons, and they get cross.

Calcutta holds out false hopes of some return. The dense smoke hangs low, in the chill of the morning, over an ocean of roofs, and, as the city wakes, there goes up to the smoke a deep, full–throated boom of life and motion and humanity. For this reason does he who sees Calcutta for the first time hang joyously out of the *ticca–ghari*[11] and sniff the smoke, and turn his face toward the tumult, saying: "This is, at last, some portion of my heritage returned to me. This is a City. There is life here, and there should be all manner of pleasant things for the having, across the river and under the smoke."

The litany is an expressive one and exactly describes the first emotions of a wandering savage adrift in Calcutta. The eye has lost its sense of proportion, the focus has contracted through overmuch residence in up–country stations—twenty minutes' canter from hospital to parade–ground, you know—and the mind has shrunk with the eye. Both say together, as they take in the sweep of shipping above and below the Hugli Bridge: "Why, this is London! This is the docks. This is Imperial. This is worth coming across India to see!"

Then a distinctly wicked idea takes possession of the mind: "What a divine—what a heavenly place to *loot*!" This gives place to a much worse devil—that of Conservatism. It seems not only a wrong but a criminal thing to allow natives to have any voice in the control of such a city—adorned, docked, wharfed, fronted, and reclaimed by Englishmen, existing only because England lives, and dependent for its life on England. All India knows of the Calcutta Municipality; but has any one thoroughly investigated the Big Calcutta Stink? There is only one. Benares is fouler in point of concentrated, pent–up muck, and there are local stenches in Peshawar which are stronger than the B. C. S.; but, for diffused, soul–sickening expansiveness, the reek of Calcutta beats both Benares and Peshawar. Bombay cloaks her stenches with a veneer of assafoetida and tobacco; Calcutta is above pretence. There is no tracing back the Calcutta plague to any one source. It is faint, it is sickly, and it is indescribable; but Americans at the Great Eastern Hotel say that it is something like the smell of the Chinese quarter in San Francisco. It is certainly not an Indian smell. It resembles the essence of corruption that has rotted for the second time—the clammy odour of blue slime. And there is no escape from it. It blows across the *maidan*; it comes in gusts into the corridors of the Great Eastern Hotel; what they are pleased to call the "Palaces of Chowringhi" carry it; it swirls round the Bengal Club; it pours out of by–streets with sickening intensity, and the breeze of the morning is laden with it. It is first found, in spite of the fume of the engines, in Howrah Station. It seems to be worst in the little lanes at the back of Lai Bazar where the drinking–shops are, but it is nearly as bad opposite Government House and in the Public Offices. The thing is intermittent. Six moderately pure mouthfuls of air may be drawn without offence. Then comes the seventh wave and the queasiness of an uncultured stomach. If you live long enough in Calcutta you grow used to it. The regular residents admit the disgrace, but their answer is: "Wait till the wind blows off the Salt Lakes where all the sewage goes, and *then* you'll smell something." That is their defence! Small wonder that they consider Calcutta is a fit place for a permanent Viceroy. Englishmen who can calmly extenuate one shame by another are capable of asking for anything—and expecting to get it.

If an up–country station holding three thousand troops and twenty civilians owned such a possession as Calcutta does, the Deputy Commissioner or the Cantonment Magistrate would have all the natives off the board of management or decently shovelled into the background until the mess was abated. Then they might come on again and talk of "high–handed oppression" as much as they liked. That stink, to an unprejudiced nose, damns Calcutta as a City of Kings. And, in spite of that stink, they allow, they even encourage, natives to look after the place! The damp, drainage–soaked soil is sick with the teeming life of a hundred years, and the Municipal Board list is choked with the names of natives—men of the breed born in and raised off this surfeited muck–heap! They own property, these amiable Aryans on the Municipal and the Bengal Legislative Council. Launch a proposal to tax them on that property, and they naturally howl. They also howl up–country, but there the halls for mass–meetings are few, and the vernacular papers fewer, and with a strong Secretary and a President whose favour is worth the having and whose wrath is undesirable, men are kept clean despite themselves, and may not poison their neighbours. Why, asks a savage, let them vote at all? They can put up with this filthiness. They *cannot* have any feelings worth caring a rush for. Let them live quietly and hide away their money under our protection, while we tax them till they know through their purses the measure of their neglect in the past, and when a little of the smell has been abolished, let us bring them back again to talk and take the credit of enlightenment. The better classes own their broughams and barouches; the worse can shoulder an Englishman into the kennel and talk to him as though he were a cook. They can refer to an English lady as an *aurat*[12]; they are permitted a freedom—not to put it too coarsely—of speech which, if used by an Englishman toward an Englishman, would end in serious trouble. They are fenced and protected and made inviolate. Surely they might be content with all those things without entering into matters which they cannot, by the nature of their birth, understand.

Now, whether all this genial diatribe be the outcome of an unbiassed mind or the result first of sickness caused by that ferocious stench, and secondly of headache due to day–long smoking to drown the stench, is an open question. Anyway, Calcutta is a fearsome place for a man not educated up to it.

A word of advice to other barbarians. Do not bring a north–country servant into Calcutta. He is sure to get into trouble, because he does not understand the customs of the city. A Punjabi in this place for the first time esteems it his bounden duty to go to the *Ajaib–ghar*—the Museum. Such an one has gone and is even now returned very angry and troubled in the spirit. "I went to the Museum," says he, "and

no one gave me any abuse. I went to the market to buy my food, and then I sat upon a seat. There came an orderly who said, 'Go away, I want to sit here.' I said, 'I am here first.' He said, 'I am a *chaprassi*![13] get out!' and he hit me. Now that sitting–place was open to all, so I hit him till he wept. He ran away for the Police, and I went away too, for the Police here are all Sahibs. Can I have leave from two o'clock to go and look for that man and hit him again?"

Behold the situation! An unknown city full of smell that makes one long for rest and retirement, and a champing servant, not yet six hours in the stew, who has started a blood–feud with an unknown *chaprassi* and clamours to go forth to the fray.

Alas! for the lost delusion of the heritage that was to be restored. Let us sleep, let us sleep, and pray that Calcutta may be better to–morrow.

At present it is remarkably like sleeping with a corpse.

Chapter II

The Reflections of a Savage

Morning brings counsel. *Does* Calcutta smell so pestiferously after all? Heavy rain has fallen in the night. She is newly washed, and the clear sunlight shows her at her best. Where, oh where, in all this wilderness of life shall a man go?

The Great Eastern hums with life through all its hundred rooms. Doors slam merrily, and all the nations of the earth run up and down the staircases. This alone is refreshing, because the passers bump you and ask you to stand aside. Fancy finding any place outside the Levée–room where Englishmen are crowded together to this extent! Fancy sitting down seventy strong to *tâble d'hôte* and with a deafening clatter of knives and forks! Fancy finding a real bar whence drinks may be obtained! and, joy of joys, fancy stepping out of the hotel into the arms of a live, white, helmeted, buttoned, truncheoned Bobby! What would happen if one spoke to this Bobby? Would he be offended? He is not offended. He is affable. He has to patrol the pavement in front of the Great Eastern and to see that the crowding carriages do not jam. Toward a presumably respectable white he behaves as a man and a brother. There is no arrogance, about him. And this is disappointing. Closer inspection shows that he is not a *real* Bobby after all. He is a Municipal Police Something and his uniform is not correct; at least if they have not changed the dress of the men at Home. But no matter. Later on we will inquire into the Calcutta Bobby, because he is a white man, and has to deal with some of the "toughest" folk that ever set out of malice aforethought to paint Job Charnock's city vermilion. You must not, you cannot cross Old Court House Street without looking carefully to see that you stand no chance of being run over. This is beautiful. There is a steady roar of traffic, cut every two minutes by the deep roll of the trams. The driving is eccentric, not to say bad, but there is the traffic—more than unsophisticated eyes have beheld for a certain number of years. It means business, it means money–making, it means crowded and hurrying life, and it gets into the blood and makes it move. Here be big shops with plate–glass fronts—all displaying the well–known names of firms that we savages only correspond with through the Parcels Post.[14] They are all here, as large as life, ready to supply anything you need if you only care to sign. Great is the fascination of being able to obtain a thing on the spot without having to write for a week and wait for a month, and then get something quite different. No wonder pretty ladies, who live anywhere within a reasonable distance, come down to do their shopping personally.

"Look here. If you want to be respectable you mustn't smoke in the streets. Nobody does it." This is advice kindly tendered by a friend in a black coat. There is no Levée or Lieutenant–Governor in sight; but he wears the frock–coat because it is daylight, and he can be seen. He refrains from smoking for the same reason. He admits that Providence built the open air to be smoked in, but he says that "it isn't the thing." This man has a brougham, a remarkably natty little pill–box with a curious wabble about the wheels. He steps into the brougham and puts on—a top–hat, a shiny black "plug."

There was a man up–country once who owned a top–hat. He leased it to amateur theatrical companies for some seasons until the nap wore off. Then he threw it into a tree and wild bees hived in it. Men were wont to come and look at the hat, in its palmy days, for the sake of feeling homesick. It interested all the station, and died with two seers of *babul*–flower honey in its bosom. But top–hats are not intended to be worn in India. They are as sacred as home letters and old rosebuds. The friend cannot see this. He allows that if he stepped out of his brougham and walked about in the sunshine for ten minutes he would get a bad headache. In half–an–hour he would probably die of sunstroke. He allows all this, but he keeps to his Hat and cannot see why a barbarian is moved to inextinguishable laughter at the sight. Every one who owns a brougham and many people who hire *ticca–gharis* keep top–hats and black frock–coats. The effect is curious, and at first fills the beholder with surprise.

And now, "let us see the handsome houses where the wealthy nobles dwell." Northerly lies the great human jungle of the native city, stretching from Burra Bazar to Chitpore. That can keep. Southerly is the *maidan* and Chowringhi. "If you get out into the centre of the *maidan* you will understand why Calcutta is called the City of Palaces." The travelled American said so at the Great Eastern. There is a short tower, falsely called a "memorial," standing in a waste of soft, sour green. That is as good a place to get to as any other. The size of the *maidan* takes the heart out of any one accustomed to the "gardens" of up–country, just as they say Newmarket Heath cows a horse accustomed to more a shut–in course. The huge level is studded with brazen statues of eminent gentlemen riding fretful horses on diabolically severe curbs. The expanse dwarfs the statues, dwarfs everything except the frontage of the far–away Chowringhi Road. It is big—it is impressive. There is no escaping the fact. They built houses in the old days when the rupee was two shillings and a penny. Those houses are three–storied, and ornamented with service–staircases like houses in the Hills. They are very close together, and they have garden walls of masonry pierced with a single gate. In their shut–upness they are British. In their spaciousness they are Oriental, but

those service–staircases do not look healthy. We will form an amateur sanitary commission and call upon Chowringhi.

A first introduction to the Calcutta *durwân* or door–keeper is not nice. If he is chewing *pân*, he does not take the trouble to get rid of his quid. If he is sitting on his cot chewing sugar–cane, he does not think it worth his while to rise. He has to be taught those things, and he cannot understand why he should be reproved. Clearly he is a survival of a played–out system. Providence never intended that any native should be made a *concierge* more insolent than any of the French variety. The people of Calcutta put a man in a little lodge close to the gate of their house, in order that loafers may be turned away, and the houses protected from theft. The natural result is that the *durwân* treats everybody whom he does not know as a loafer, has an intimate and vendible knowledge of all the outgoings and incomings in that house, and controls, to a large extent, the nomination of the servants. They say that one of the estimable class is now suing a bank for about three lakhs of rupees.[15] Up–country, a Lieutenant–Governor's servant has to work for thirty years before he can retire on seventy thousand rupees of savings. The Calcutta *durwân* is a great institution. The head and front of his offence is that he will insist upon trying to talk English. How he protects the houses Calcutta only knows. He can be frightened out of his wits by severe speech, and is generally asleep in calling hours. If a rough round of visits be any guide, three times out of seven he is fragrant of drink. So much for the *durwân*. Now for the houses he guards.

Very pleasant is the sensation of being ushered into a pestiferously stablesome drawing–room. "Does this always happen?" "No, not unless you shut up the room for some time; but if you open the shutters there are other smells. You see the stables and the servants' quarters are close to." People pay five hundred a month for half–a–dozen rooms filled with scents of this kind. They make no complaint. When they think the honour of the city is at stake they say defiantly: "Yes, but you must remember we're a metropolis. We are crowded here. We have no room. We aren't like your little stations." Chowringhi is a stately place full of sumptuous houses, but it is best to look at it hastily. Stop to consider for a moment what the cramped compounds, the black soaked soil, the netted intricacies of the service–staircases, the packed stables, the seethment of human life round the *durwâns'* lodges and the curious arrangement of little open drains mean, and you will call it a whited sepulchre.

Men living in expensive tenements suffer from chronic sore throat, and will tell you cheerily that "we've got typhoid in Calcutta now." Is the pest ever out of it? Everything seems to be built with a view to its comfort. It can lodge comfortably on roofs, climb along

from the gutter–pipe to piazza, or rise from sink to verandah and thence to the topmost story. But Calcutta says that all is sound and produces figures to prove it; at the same time admitting that healthy cut flesh will not readily heal. Further evidence may be dispensed with.

Here come pouring down Park Street on the *maidân* a rush of broughams, neat buggies, the lightest of gigs, trim office brownberrys, shining victorias, and a sprinkling of veritable hansom cabs. In the broughams sit men in top–hats. In the other carts, young men, all very much alike, and all immaculately turned out. A fresh stream from Chowringhi joins the Park Street detachment, and the two together stream away across the *maidân* toward the business quarter of the city. This is Calcutta going to office—the civilians to the Government Buildings and the young men to their firms and their blocks and their wharves. Here one sees that Calcutta has the best turn–out in the Empire. Horses and traps alike are enviably perfect, and—mark the touchstone of civilization—*the lamps are in their sockets!* The country–bred is a rare beast here; his place is taken by the Waler,[16] and the Waler, though a ruffian at heart, can be made to look like a gentleman. It would be indecorous to applaud the winking harness, the perfectly lacquered panels, and the liveried *saises*. They show well in the outwardly fair roads shadowed by the Palaces.

How many sections of the complex society of the place do the carts carry? *First*, the Bengal Civilian who goes to Writers' Buildings and sits in a perfect office and speaks flippantly of "sending things to India," meaning thereby referring matters to the Supreme Government. He is a great person, and his mouth is full of promotion–and–appointment "shop." Generally he is referred to as a "rising man." Calcutta seems full of "rising men." *Secondly*, the Government of India man, who wears a familiar Simla face, rents a flat when he is not up in the Hills, and is rational on the subject of the drawbacks of Calcutta. *Thirdly*, the man of the "firms," the pure non–official who fights under the banner of one of the great houses of the City, or for his own hand in a neat office, or dashes about Clive Street in a brougham doing "share work" or something of the kind. He fears not "Bengal," nor regards he "India." He swears impartially at both when their actions interfere with his operations. His "shop" is quite unintelligible. He is like the English city man with the chill off, lives well and entertains hospitably. In the old days he was greater than he is now, but still he bulks large. He is rational in so far that he will help the abuse of the Municipality, but womanish in his insistence on the excellencies of Calcutta. Over and above these who are hurrying to work are the various brigades, squads, and detachments of the other interests. But they are sets and not sections, and revolve round Belvedere,

Government House, and Fort William. Simla and Darjeeling claim them in the hot weather. Let them go. They wear top–hats and frock–coats.

It is time to escape from Chowringhi Road and get among the long–shore folk, who have no prejudices against tobacco, and who all use very much the same sort of hat.

Chapter III

The Council of the Gods - He Set Up Conclusions to the Number of Nine Thousand Seven Hundred and Sixty-four ... He Went Afterwards to the Sorbonne, Where He Maintained Argument Against the Theologians for the Space of Six Weeks, From Four O'clock in the Morning Till Six in the Evening, Except for an Interval of Two Hours to Refresh Themselves and Take Their Repasts, and at This Were Present the Greatest Part of the Lords of the Court, the Masters of Request, Presidents, Counsellors, Those of the Accompts, Secretaries, Advocates, and Others; as Also the Sheriffs of the Said Town.--pantagruel.

"The Bengal Legislative Council is sitting now. You will find it in an octagonal wing of Writers' Buildings: straight across the *maidân*. It's worth seeing." "What are they sitting on?" "Municipal business. No end of a debate." So much for trying to keep low company. The long–shore loafers must stand over. Without doubt this Council is going to hang some one for the state of the City, and Sir Steuart Bayley will be chief executioner. One does not come across councils every day.

Writers' Buildings are large. You can trouble the busy workers of half–a–dozen departments before you stumble upon the black–stained staircase that leads to an upper chamber looking out over a populous street. Wild orderlies block the way. The Councillor Sahibs are sitting, but any one can enter. "To the right of the Lât Sahib's chair, and go quietly." Ill–mannered minion! Does he expect the awe–stricken spectator to prance in with a war–whoop or turn Catherine–wheels round that sumptuous octagonal room with the blue–domed roof? There are gilt capitals to the half pillars and an Egyptian patterned lotus–stencil makes the walls gay. A thick piled carpet covers all the floor, and must be delightful in the hot weather. On a black wooden throne, comfortably cushioned in green leather, sits Sir Steuart Bayley, Ruler of Bengal. The rest are all great men, or else they would not be there. Not to know them argues oneself unknown. There are a dozen of them, and sit six aside at two slightly curved lines of beautifully polished desks. Thus Sir Steuart Bayley occupies the frog of a badly made horse–shoe split at the toe. In front of him, at a table covered with books and pamphlets and papers, toils a secretary. There is a seat for the Reporters, and that is all. The place enjoys a chastened gloom, and its very atmosphere fills one with awe. This is the heart of Bengal, and uncommonly well upholstered. If the work matches the first–class furniture, the inkpots, the carpet, and the resplendent ceilings, there will be something worth seeing. But where is the criminal who is to be hanged for the stench that runs up and down Writers' Buildings

staircases; for the rubbish heaps in the Chitpore Road; for the sickly savour of Chowringhi; for the dirty little tanks at the back of Belvedere; for the street full of small–pox; for the reeking ghari–stand outside the Great Eastern; for the state of the stone and dirt pavements; for the condition of the gullies of Shampooker, and for a hundred other things?

"This, I submit, is an artificial scheme in supersession of Nature's unit, the individual." The speaker is a slight, spare native in a flat hat–turban, and a black alpaca frock–coat. He looks like a scribe to the boot–heels, and, with his unvarying smile and regulated gesticulation, recalls memories of up–country courts. He never hesitates, is never at a loss for a word, and never in one sentence repeats himself. He talks and talks and talks in a level voice, rising occasionally half an octave when a point has to be driven home. Some of his periods sound very familiar. This, for instance, might be a sentence from the *Indian Mirror*: "So much for the principle. Let us now examine how far it is supported by precedent." This sounds bad. When a fluent native is discoursing of "principles" and "precedents," the chances are that he will go on for some time. Moreover, where is the criminal, and what is all this talk about abstractions? They want shovels not sentiments, in this part of the world.

A friendly whisper brings enlightenment: "They are ploughing through the Calcutta Municipal Bill—plurality of votes, you know. Here are the papers." And so it is! A mass of motions and amendments on matters relating to ward votes. Is *A* to be allowed to give two votes in one ward and one in another? Is section 10 to be omitted, and is one man to be allowed one vote and no more? How many votes does three hundred rupees' worth of landed property carry? Is it better to kiss a post or throw it in the fire? Not a word about carbolic acid and gangs of sweepers. The little man in the black dressing–gown revels in his subject. He is great on principles and precedents, and the necessity of "popularising our system." He fears that under certain circumstances "the status of the candidates will decline." He riots in "self–adjusting majorities," and "the healthy influence of the educated middle classes."

For a practical answer to this, there steals across the council chamber just one faint whiff of the Stink. It is as though some one laughed low and bitterly. But no man heeds. The Englishmen look supremely bored, the native members stare stolidly in front of them. Sir Steuart Bayley's face is as set as the face of the Sphinx. For these things he draws his pay,—a low wage for heavy labour. But the speaker, now adrift, is not altogether to be blamed. He is a Bengali, who has got before him just such a subject as his soul loveth,—an elaborate piece of academical reform leading nowhere. Here is a quiet

room full of pens and papers, and there are men who must listen to him. Apparently there is no time limit to the speeches. Can you wonder that he talks? He says "I submit" once every ninety seconds, varying the form with "I do submit, the popular element in the electoral body should have prominence." Quite so. He quotes one John Stuart Mill to prove it. There steals over the listener a numbing sense of nightmare. He has heard all this before somewhere—yea; even down to J. S. Mill and the references to the "true interests of the ratepayers." He sees what is coming next. Yes, there is the old Sabha, Anjuman journalistic formula—"Western education is an exotic plant of recent importation." How on earth did this man drag Western education into this discussion? Who knows? Perhaps Sir Steuart Bayley does. He seems to be listening. The others are looking at their watches. The spell of the level voice sinks the listener yet deeper into a trance. He is haunted by the ghosts of all the cant of all the political platforms of Great Britain. He hears all the old, old vestry phrases, and once more he smells the Smell. *That* is no dream. Western education is an exotic plant. It is the upas tree, and it is all our fault. We brought it out from England exactly as we brought out the ink–bottles and the patterns for the chairs. We planted it and it grew—monstrous as a banian. Now we are choked by the roots of it spreading so thickly in this fat soil of Bengal. The speaker continues. Bit by bit we builded this dome, visible and invisible, the crown of Writers' Buildings, as we have built and peopled the buildings. Now we have gone too far to retreat, being "tied and bound with the chain of our own sins." The speech continues. We made that florid sentence. That torrent of verbiage is Ours. We taught him what was constitutional and what was unconstitutional in the days when Calcutta smelt. Calcutta smells still, but We must listen to all that he has to say about the plurality of votes and the threshing of wind and the weaving of ropes of sand. It is Our own fault.

The speech ends, and there rises a grey Englishman in a black frock–coat. He looks a strong man, and a worldly. Surely he will say, "Yes, Lala Sahib, all this may be true talk, but there's a vile smell in this place, and everything must be cleaned in a week, or the Deputy Commissioner will not take any notice of you in *durbar*." He says nothing of the kind. This is a Legislative Council, where they call each other "Honourable So–and–So's." The Englishman in the frock–coat begs all to remember that "we are discussing principles, and no consideration of the details ought to influence the verdict on the principles." Is he then like the rest? How does this strange thing come about? Perhaps these so English office fittings are responsible for the warp. The Council Chamber might be a London Board–room. Perhaps after long years among the pens and papers its occupants grew to

think that it really is, and in this belief give *résumés* of the history of Local Self–Government in England.

The black frock–coat, emphasising his points with his spectacle–case, is telling his friends how the parish was first the unit of self–government. He then explains how burgesses were elected, and in tones of deep fervour announces, "Commissioners of Sewers are elected in the same way." Whereunto all this lecture? Is he trying to run a motion through under cover of a cloud of words, essaying the well–known "cuttle–fish trick" of the West?

He abandons England for a while, and *now* we get a glimpse of the cloven hoof in a casual reference to Hindus and Mahometans. The Hindus will lose nothing by the complete establishment of plurality of votes. They will have the control of their own wards as they used to have. So there is race–feeling, to be explained away, even among these beautiful desks. Scratch the Council, and you come to the old, old trouble. The black frock–coat sits down, and a keen–eyed, black–bearded Englishman rises with one hand in his pocket to explain his views on an alteration of the vote qualification. The idea of an amendment seems to have just struck him. He hints that he will bring it forward later on. He is academical like the others, but not half so good a speaker. All this is dreary beyond words. Why do they talk and talk about owners and occupiers and burgesses in England and the growth of autonomous institutions when the city, the great city, is here crying out to be cleansed? What has England to do with Calcutta's evil, and why should Englishmen be forced to wander through mazes of unprofitable argument against men who cannot understand the iniquity of dirt?

A pause follows the black–bearded man's speech. Rises another native, a heavily built Babu, in a black gown and a strange head–dress. A snowy white strip of cloth is thrown duster–wise over his shoulders. His voice is high, and not always under control. He begins, "I will try to be as brief as possible." This is ominous. By the way, in Council there seems to be no necessity for a form of address. The orators plunge *in medias res*, and only when they are well launched throw an occasional "Sir" towards Sir Steuart Bayley, who sits with one leg doubled under him and a dry pen in his hand. This speaker is no good. He talks, but he says nothing, and he only knows where he is drifting to. He says: "We must remember that we are legislating for the Metropolis of India, and therefore we should borrow our institutions from large English towns, and not from parochial institutions." If you think for a minute, that shows a large and healthy knowledge of the history of Local Self–Government. It also reveals the attitude of Calcutta. If the city thought less about itself as a metropolis and more as a midden, its state would be better. The speaker talks patronisingly

of "my friend," alluding to the black frock–coat. Then he flounders afresh, and his voice gallops up the gamut as he declares, "and *therefore* that makes all the difference." He hints vaguely at threats, something to do with the Hindus and the Mahometans, but what he means it is difficult to discover. Here, however, is a sentence taken *verbatim*. It is not likely to appear in this form in the Calcutta papers. The black frock–coat had said that if a wealthy native "had eight votes to his credit, his vanity would prompt him to go to the polling–booth, because he would feel better than half–a–dozen *ghari–wans* or petty traders." (Fancy allowing a *ghari–wan* to vote! He has yet to learn how to drive!) Hereon the gentleman with the white cloth: "Then the complaint is that influential voters will not take the trouble to vote? In my humble opinion, if that be so, adopt voting–papers. *That* is the way to meet them. In the same way—The Calcutta Trades' Association—you abolish all plurality of votes: and that is the way to meet *them*." Lucid, is it not? Up flies the irresponsible voice, and delivers this statement, "In the election for the House of Commons plurality are allowed for persons having interest in different districts." Then hopeless, hopeless fog. It is a great pity that India ever heard of anybody higher than the heads of the Civil Service. Once more a whiff of the Stink. The gentleman gives a defiant jerk of his shoulder–cloth, and sits down.

Then Sir Steuart Bayley: "The question before the Council is," etc. There is a ripple of "Ayes" and "Noes," and the "Noes" have it, whatever it may be. The black–bearded gentleman springs his amendment about the voting qualifications. A large senator in a white waistcoat, and with a most genial smile, rises and proceeds to smash up the amendment. Can't see the use of it. Calls it in effect rubbish. The black dressing–gown, he who spoke first of all, speaks again, and talks of the "sojourner who comes here for a little time, and then leaves the land." Well it is for the black gown that the sojourner does come, or there would be no comfy places wherein to talk about the power that can be measured by wealth and the intellect "which, sir, I submit, cannot be so measured." The amendment is lost; and trebly and quadruply lost is the listener. In the name of sanity and to preserve the tattered shirt–tails of a torn illusion, let us escape! This is the Calcutta Municipal Bill. They have been at it for several Saturdays. Last Saturday Sir Steuart Bayley pointed out that at their present rate they would be about two years in getting it through. Now they will sit till dusk, unless Sir Steuart Bayley, who wants to see Lord Connemara off, puts up the black frock–coat to move an adjournment. It is not good to watch a Government close to. This leads to the formation of blatantly self–satisfied judgments, which may be quite as wrong as the cramping system with which we have encompassed ourselves. And in

the streets outside Englishmen summarise the situation brutally, thus: "The whole thing is a farce. Time is money to us. We can't stick out those everlasting speeches in the municipality. The natives choke us off, but we know that if things get too bad the Government will step in and interfere, and so we worry along somehow."

Meantime Calcutta continues to cry out for the bucket and the broom.

Chapter IV

On the Banks of the Hugli

The clocks of the city have struck two. Where can a man get food? Calcutta is not rich in respect of dainty accommodation. You can stay your stomach at Peliti's or Bonsard's, but their shops are not to be found in Hastings Street, or in the places where brokers fly to and fro in office–jauns, sweating and growing visibly rich. There must be some sort of entertainment where sailors congregate. "Honest Bombay Jack" supplies nothing but Burma cheroots and whisky in liqueur–glasses, but in Lal Bazar, not far from "The Sailors' Coffee–rooms," a board gives bold advertisement that "officers and seamen can find good quarters." In evidence a row of neat officers and seamen are sitting on a bench by the "hotel" door smoking. There is an almost military likeness in their clothes. Perhaps "Honest Bombay Jack" only keeps one kind of felt hat and one brand of suit. When Jack of the mercantile marine is sober, he is very sober. When he is drunk he is—but ask the river police what a lean, mad Yankee can do with his nails and teeth. These gentlemen smoking on the bench are impassive almost as Red Indians. Their attitudes are unrestrained, and they do not wear braces. Nor, it would appear from the bill of fare, are they particular as to what they eat when they attend *tâble d'hôte*. The fare is substantial and the regulation "peg"—every house has its own depth of peg if you will refrain from stopping Ganymede—something to wonder at. Three fingers and a trifle over seems to be the use of the officers and seamen who are talking so quietly in the doorway. One says—he has evidently finished a long story—"and so he shipped for four pound ten with a first mate's certificate and all. And that was in a German barque." Another spits with conviction and says genially, without raising his voice, "That was a hell of a ship. Who knows her?" No answer from the assembly, but a Dane or a German wants to know whether the *Myra* is "up" yet. A dry, red–haired man gives her exact position in the river—(How in the world can he know?)—and the probable hour of her arrival. The grave debate drifts into a discussion of a recent river accident, whereby a big steamer was damaged, and had to put back and discharge cargo. A burly gentleman who is taking a constitutional down Lal Bazar strolls up and says: "I tell you she fouled her own chain with her own forefoot. Hev you seen the plates?" "No." "Then how the — can any — like you — say what it — well was?" He passes on, having delivered his highly flavored opinion without heat or passion. No one seems to resent the garnish.

Let us get down to the river and see this stamp of men more thoroughly. Clarke Russell has told us that their lives are hard enough

in all conscience. What are their pleasures and diversions? The Port Office, where live the gentlemen who make improvements in the Port of Calcutta, ought to supply information. It stands large and fair, and built in an orientalised manner after the Italians at the corner of Fairlie Place upon the great Strand Road, and a continual clamour of traffic by land and by sea goes up throughout the day and far into the night against its windows. This is a place to enter more reverently than the Bengal Legislative Council, for it controls the direction of the uncertain Hugli down to the Sandheads, owns enormous wealth, and spends huge sums on the frontaging of river banks, the expansion of jetties, and the manufacture of docks costing two hundred lakhs of rupees. Two million tons of sea–going shippage yearly find their way up and down the river by the guidance of the Port Office, and the men of the Port Office know more than it is good for men to hold in their heads. They can without reference to telegraphic bulletins give the position of all the big steamers, coming up or going down, from the Hugli to the sea, day by day, with their tonnage, the names of their captains and the nature of their cargo. Looking out from the verandah of their office over a lancer–regiment of masts, they can declare truthfully the name of every ship within eye–scope, with the day and hour when she will depart.

In a room at the bottom of the building lounge big men, carefully dressed. Now there is a type of face which belongs almost exclusively to Bengal Cavalry officers—majors for choice. Everybody knows the bronzed, black–moustached, clear–speaking Native Cavalry officer. He exists unnaturally in novels, and naturally on the Frontier. These men in the big room have his cast of face so strongly marked that one marvels what officers are doing by the river. "Have they come to book passages for home?" "Those men? They're pilots. Some of them draw between two and three thousand rupees a month. They are responsible for half–a–million pounds' worth of cargo sometimes." They certainly are men, and they carry themselves as such. They confer together by twos and threes, and appeal frequently to shipping lists.

"*Isn't* a pilot a man who always wears a pea–jacket and shouts through a speaking–trumpet?" "Well, you can ask those gentlemen if you like. You've got your notions from Home pilots. Ours aren't that kind exactly. They are a picked service, as carefully weeded as the Indian Civil. Some of 'em have brothers in it, and some belong to the old Indian army families." But they are not all equally well paid. The Calcutta papers echo the groans of the junior pilots who are not allowed the handling of ships over a certain tonnage. As it is yearly growing cheaper to build one big steamer than two little ones, these juniors are crowded out, and, while the seniors get their thousands, some of the youngsters make at the end of one month exactly thirty

rupees. This is a grievance with them, and it seems well–founded.

In the flats above the pilot's room are hushed and chapel–like offices, all sumptuously fitted, where Englishmen write and telephone and telegraph, and deft Babus for ever draw maps of the shifting Hugli. Any hope of understanding the work of the Port Commissioners is thoroughly dashed by being taken through the Port maps of a quarter of a century past. Men have played with the Hugli as children play with a gutter–runnel, and, in return, the Hugli once rose and played with men and ships till the Strand Road was littered with the raffle and the carcasses of big ships. There are photos on the walls of the cyclone of '64, when the *Thunder* came inland and sat upon an American barque, obstructing all the traffic. Very curious are these photos, and almost impossible to believe. How can a big, strong steamer have her three masts razed to deck level? How can a heavy, country boat be pitched on to the poop of a high–walled liner? and how can the side be bodily torn out of a ship? The photos say that all these things are possible, and men aver that a cyclone may come again and scatter the craft like chaff. Outside the Port Office are the export and import sheds, buildings that can hold a ship's cargo apiece, all standing on reclaimed ground. Here be several strong smells, a mass of railway lines, and a multitude of men. "Do you see where that trolly is standing, behind the big P. and O. berth? In that place as nearly as may be the *Govindpur* went down about twenty years ago, and began to shift out!" "But that is solid ground." "She sank there, and the next tide made a scour–hole on one side of her. The returning tide knocked her into it. Then the mud made up behind her. Next tide the business was repeated—always the scour–hole in the mud and the filling up behind her. So she rolled, and was pushed out and out until she got in the way of the shipping right out yonder, and we had to blow her up. When a ship sinks in mud or quicksand she regularly digs her own grave and wriggles herself into it deeper and deeper till she reaches moderately solid stuff. Then she sticks." Horrible idea, is it not, to go down and down with each tide into the foul Hugli mud?

Close to the Port Offices is the Shipping Office, where the captains engage their crews. The men must produce their discharges from their last ships in the presence of the shipping master, or, as they call him, "The Deputy Shipping." He passes them after having satisfied himself that they are not deserters from other ships, and they then sign articles for the voyage. This is the ceremony, beginning with the "dearly beloved" of the crew–hunting captain down to the "amazement" of the deserter. There is a dingy building, next door to the Sailors' Home, at whose gate stand the cast–ups of all the seas in all manner of raiment. There are the Seedee boys, Bombay *serangs* and Madras fishermen of the salt villages, Malays who insist upon

marrying Calcutta women, grow jealous and run *amok*; Malay–Hindus, Hindu–Malay–Whites, Burmese, Burma–Whites, Burma–Native–Whites, Italians with gold earrings and a thirst for gambling, Yankees of all the States, with Mulattoes and pure buck–niggers, red and rough Danes, Cingalese, Cornish boys fresh taken from the plough–tail, "corn–stalks" from colonial ships where they got four pound ten a month as seamen, tun–bellied Germans, Cockney mates keeping a little aloof from the crowd and talking in knots together, unmistakable "Tommies" who have tumbled into seafaring life by some mistake, cockatoo–tufted Welshmen spitting and swearing like cats, broken–down loafers, grey–headed, penniless, and pitiful, swaggering boys, and very quiet men with gashes and cuts on their faces. It is an ethnological museum where all the specimens are playing comedies and tragedies. The head of it all is the "Deputy Shipping," and he sits, supported by an English policeman whose fists are knobby, in a great Chair of State. The "Deputy Shipping" knows all the iniquity of the river–side, all the ships, all the captains, and a fair amount of the men. He is fenced off from the crowd by a strong wooden railing behind which are gathered the unemployed of the mercantile marine. They have had their spree—poor devils—and now they will go to sea again on as low a wage as three pound ten a month, to fetch up at the end in some Shanghai stew or San Francisco hell. They have turned their backs on the seductions of the Howrah boarding–houses and the delights of Colootollah. If Fate will, "Nightingale's" will know them no more for a season. But what skipper will take some of these battered, shattered wrecks whose hands shake and whose eyes are red?

Enter suddenly a bearded captain, who has made his selection from the crowd on a previous day, and now wants to get his men passed. He is not fastidious in his choice. His eleven seem a tough lot for such a mild–eyed, civil–spoken man to manage. But the captain in the Shipping Office and the captain on his ship are two different things. He brings his crew up to the "Deputy Shipping's" bar, and hands in their greasy, tattered discharges. But the heart of the "Deputy Shipping" is hot within him, because, two days ago, a Howrah crimp stole a whole crew from a down–dropping ship, insomuch that the captain had to come back and whip up a new crew at one o'clock in the day. Evil will it be if the "Deputy Shipping" finds one of these bounty–jumpers in the chosen crew of the *Blenkindoon*.

The "Deputy Shipping" tells the story with heat. "I didn't know they did such things in Calcutta," says the captain. "Do such things! They'd steal the eye–teeth out of your head there, Captain." He picks up a discharge and calls for Michael Donelly, a loose–knit, vicious–looking Irish–American who chews. "Stand up, man, stand up!" Michael Donelly wants to lean against the desk, and the English

policeman won't have it. "What was your last ship?" "*Fairy Queen.*" "When did you leave her?" "'Bout 'leven days." "Captain's name?" "Flahy." "That'll do. Next man: Jules Anderson." Jules Anderson is a Dane. His statements tally with the discharge–certificate of the United States, as the Eagle attesteth. He is passed and falls back. Slivey, the Englishman, and David, a huge plum–coloured negro who ships as cook, are also passed. Then comes Bassompra, a little Italian, who speaks English. "What's your last ship?" "*Ferdinand.*" "No, after that?" "German barque." Bassompra does not look happy. "When did she sail?" "About three weeks ago." "What's her name?" "*Haidée.*" "You deserted from her?" "Yes, but she's left port." The "Deputy Shipping" runs rapidly through a shipping–list, throws it down with a bang. "'Twon't do. No German barque *Haidée* here for three months. How do I know you don't belong to the *Jackson's* crew? Cap'en, I'm afraid you'll have to ship another man. He must stand over. Take the rest away and make 'em sign."

The bead–eyed Bassompra seems to have lost his chance of a voyage, and his case will be inquired into. The captain departs with his men and they sign articles for the voyage, while the "Deputy Shipping" tells strange tales of the sailorman's life. "They'll quit a good ship for the sake of a spree, and catch on again at three pound ten, and by Jove, they'll let their skippers pay 'em at ten rupees to the sovereign—poor beggars. As soon as the money's gone they'll ship, but not before. Every one under rank of captain engages here. The competition makes first–mates ship sometimes for five pounds or as low as four ten a month." (The gentleman in the boarding–house was right, you see.) "A first mate's wages are seven ten or eight, and foreign captains ship for twelve pounds a month and bring their own small stores—everything, that is to say, except beef, peas, flour, coffee, and molasses."

These things are not pleasant to listen to while the hungry–eyed men in the bad clothes lounge and scratch and loaf behind the railing. What comes to them in the end? They die, it seems, though that is not altogether strange. They die at sea in strange and horrible ways; they die, a few of them, in the Kintals, being lost and suffocated in the great sink of Calcutta; they die, in strange places by the water–side, and the Hugli takes them away under the mooring chains and the buoys, and casts them up on the sands below, if the River Police have missed the capture. They sail the sea because they must live; and there is no end to their toil. Very, very few find haven of any kind, and the earth, whose ways they do not understand, is cruel to them, when they walk upon it to drink and be merry after the manner of beasts. Jack ashore is a pretty thing when he is in a book or in the blue jacket of the Navy. Mercantile Jack is not so lovely. Later on, we will see

where his "sprees" lead him.

Chapter V

With the Calcutta Police - "The City Was of Night--perchance of Death, but Certainly of Night." - --the City of Dreadful Night.

In the beginning, the Police were responsible. They said in a patronising way that they would prefer to take a wanderer round the great city themselves, sooner than let him contract a broken head on his own account in the slums. They said that there were places and places where a white man, unsupported by the arm of the Law, would be robbed and mobbed; and that there were other places where drunken seamen would make it very unpleasant for him.

"Come up to the fire look–out in the first place, and then you'll be able to see the city." This was at No. 22, Lal Bazar, which is the headquarters of the Calcutta Police, the centre of the great web of telephone wires where Justice sits all day and all night looking after one million people and a floating population of one hundred thousand. But her work shall be dealt with later on. The fire look–out is a little sentry–box on the top of the three–storied police offices. Here a native watchman waits to give warning to the brigade below if the smoke rises by day or the flames by night in any ward of the city. From this eyrie, in the warm night, one hears the heart of Calcutta beating. Northward, the city stretches away three long miles, with three more miles of suburbs beyond, to Dum–Dum and Barrackpore. The lamplit dusk on this side is full of noises and shouts and smells. Close to the Police Office, jovial mariners at the sailors' coffee–shop are roaring hymns. Southerly, the city's confused lights give place to the orderly lamp–rows of the *maidân* and Chowringhi, where the respectabilities live and the Police have very little to do. From the east goes up to the sky the clamour of Sealdah, the rumble of the trams, and the voices of all Bow Bazar chaffering and making merry. Westward are the business quarters, hushed now; the lamps of the shipping on the river; and the twinkling lights on the Howrah side. "Does the noise of traffic go on all through the hot weather?" "Of course. The hot months are the busiest in the year and money's tightest. You should see the brokers cutting about at that season. Calcutta *can't* stop, my dear sir." "What happens then?" "Nothing happens; the death–rate goes up a little. That's all!" Even in February, the weather would, up–country, be called muggy and stifling, but Calcutta is convinced that it is her cold season. The noises of the city grow perceptibly; it is the night side of Calcutta waking up and going abroad. Jack in the sailors' coffee–shop is singing joyously: "Shall we gather at the River—the beautiful, the beautiful, the River?" There is a clatter of hoofs in the courtyard below. Some of the Mounted Police

have come in from somewhere or other out of the great darkness. A clog–dance of iron hoofs follows, and an Englishman's voice is heard soothing an agitated horse who seems to be standing on his hind legs. Some of the Mounted Police are going out into the great darkness. "What's on?" "A dance at Government House. The Reserve men are being formed up below. They're calling the roll." The Reserve men are all English, and big English at that. They form up and tramp out of the courtyard to line Government Place, and see that Mrs. Lollipop's brougham does not get smashed up by Sirdar Chuckerbutty Bahadur's lumbering C–spring barouche with the two raw Walers. Very military men are the Calcutta European Police in their set–up, and he who knows their composition knows some startling stories of gentleman–rankers and the like. They are, despite the wearing climate they work in and the wearing work they do, as fine a five–score of Englishmen as you shall find east of Suez.

Listen for a moment from the fire look–out to the voices of the night, and you will see why they must be so. Two thousand sailors of fifty nationalities are adrift in Calcutta every Sunday, and of these perhaps two hundred are distinctly the worse for liquor. There is a mild row going on, even now, somewhere at the back of Bow Bazar, which at nightfall fills with sailormen who have a wonderful gift of falling foul of the native population. To keep the Queen's peace is of course only a small portion of Police duty, but it is trying. The burly president of the lock–up for European drunks—Calcutta central lock–up is worth seeing—rejoices in a sprained thumb just now, and has to do his work left–handed in consequence. But his left hand is a marvellously persuasive one, and when on duty his sleeves are turned up to the shoulder that the jovial mariner may see that there is no deception. The president's labours are handicapped in that the road of sin to the lock–up runs through a grimy little garden—the brick paths are worn deep with the tread of many drunken feet—where a man can give a great deal of trouble by sticking his toes into the ground and getting mixed up with the shrubs. A straight run–in would be much more convenient both for the president and the drunk. Generally speaking—and here Police experience is pretty much the same all over the civilised world—a woman–drunk is a good deal worse than a man–drunk. She scratches and bites like a Chinaman and swears like several fiends. Strange people may be unearthed in the lock–ups. Here is a perfectly true story, not three weeks old. A visitor, an unofficial one, wandered into the native side of the spacious accommodation provided for those who have gone or done wrong. A wild–eyed Babu rose from the fixed charpoy and said in the best of English, "Good morning, sir." "*Good* morning. Who are you, and what are you in for?" Then the Babu, in one breath: "I would have you know that I do not

go to prison as a criminal but as a reformer. You've read the *Vicar of Wakefield*?" "Ye–es." "Well, *I* am the Vicar of Bengal—at least that's what I call myself." The visitor collapsed. He had not nerve enough to continue the conversation. Then said the voice of the authority: "He's down in connection with a cheating case at Serampore. May be shamming insane, but he'll be looked to in time."

The best place to hear about the Police is the fire look–out. From that eyrie one can see how difficult must be the work of control over the great, growling beast of a city. By all means let us abuse the Police, but let us see what the poor wretches have to do with their three thousand natives and one hundred Englishmen. From Howrah and Bally and the other suburbs at least a hundred thousand people come in to Calcutta for the day and leave at night. Then, too, Chandernagore is handy for the fugitive law–breaker, who can enter in the evening and get away before the noon of the next day, having marked his house and broken into it.

"But how can the prevalent offence be house–breaking in a place like this?" "Easily enough. When you've seen a little of the city you'll see. Natives sleep and lie about all over the place, and whole quarters are just so many rabbit–warrens. Wait till you see the Machua Bazar. Well, besides the petty theft and burglary, we have heavy cases of forgery and fraud, that leave us with our wits pitted against a Bengali's. When a Bengali criminal is working a fraud of the sort he loves, he is about the cleverest soul you could wish for. He gives us cases a year long to unravel. Then there are the murders in the low houses—very curious things they are. You'll see the house where Sheikh Babu was murdered presently, and you'll understand. The Burra Bazar and Jora Bagan sections are the two worst ones for heavy cases; but Colootollah is the most aggravating. There's Colootollah over yonder—that patch of darkness beyond the lights. That section is full of tuppenny–ha'penny petty cases, that keep the men up all night and make 'em swear. You'll see Colootollah, and then perhaps you'll understand. Bamun Bustee is the quietest of all, and Lal Bazar and Bow Bazar, as you can see for yourself, are the rowdiest. You've no notion what the natives come to the police station for. A man will come on and want a summons against his master for refusing him half–an–hour's leave. I suppose it *does* seem rather revolutionary to an up–country man, but they try to do it here. Now wait a minute, before we go down into the city and see the Fire Brigade turned out. Business is slack with them just now, but you time 'em and see." An order is given, and a bell strikes softly thrice. There is a rush of men, the click of a bolt, a red fire–engine, spitting and swearing with the sparks flying from the furnace, is dragged out of its shelter. A huge brake, which holds supplementary horses, men, and hatchets, follows, and a

hose–cart is the third on the list. The men push the heavy things about as though they were pith toys. The men clamber up, some one says softly, "All ready there," and with an angry whistle the fire–engine, followed by the other two, flies out into Lal Bazar. Time—1 min. 40 secs. "They'll find out it's a false alarm, and come back again in five minutes." "Why?" "Because there will be no constables on the road to give 'em the direction of the fire, and because the driver wasn't told the ward of the outbreak when he went out!" "Do you mean to say that you can from this absurd pigeon–loft locate the wards in the night–time?" "What would be the good of a look–out if the man couldn't tell where the fire was?" "But it's all pitchy black, and the lights are so confusing."

"You'll be more confused in ten minutes. You'll have lost your way as you never lost it before. You're going to go round Bow Bazar section."

"And the Lord have mercy on my soul!" Calcutta, the darker portion of it, does not look an inviting place to dive into at night.

Chapter VI

The City of Dreadful Night - "And Since They Cannot Spend or Use Aright the Little Time Here Given Them in Trust, but Lavish It in Weary Undelight of Foolish Toil, and Trouble, Strife and Lust-- They Naturally Clamour to Inherit the Everlasting Future--that Their Merit May Have Full Scope.... as Surely is Most Just." - --the City of Dreadful Night.

The difficulty is to prevent this account from growing steadily unwholesome. But one cannot rake through a big city without encountering muck.

The Police kept their word. In five short minutes, as they had prophesied, their charge was lost as he had never been lost before. "Where are we now?" "Somewhere off the Chitpore Road, but you wouldn't understand if you were told. Follow now, and step pretty much where we step—there's a good deal of filth hereabouts."

The thick, greasy night shuts in everything. We have gone beyond the ancestral houses of the Ghoses of the Boses, beyond the lamps, the smells, and the crowd of Chitpore Road, and have come to a great wilderness of packed houses—just such mysterious, conspiring tenements as Dickens would have loved. There is no breeze here, and the air is perceptibly warmer. If Calcutta keeps such luxuries as Commissioners of Sewers and Paving, they die before they reach this place. The air is heavy with a faint, sour stench—the essence of long–neglected abominations—and it cannot escape from among the tall, three–storied houses. "This, my dear Sir, is a *perfectly* respectable quarter as quarters go. That house at the head of the alley, with the elaborate stucco–work round the top of the door, was built long ago by a celebrated midwife. Great people used to live here once. Now it's the—Aha! Look out for that carriage." A big mail–phaeton crashes out of the darkness and, recklessly driven, disappears. The wonder is how it ever got into this maze of narrow streets, where nobody seems to be moving, and where the dull throbbing of the city's life only comes faintly and by snatches. "Now it's the what?" "The St. John's Wood of Calcutta—for the rich Babus. That 'fitton' belonged to one of them." "Well, it's not much of a place to look at!" "Don't judge by appearances. About here live the women who have beggared kings. We aren't going to let you down into unadulterated vice all at once. You must see it first with the gilding on—and mind that rotten board."

Stand at the bottom of a lift shaft and look upwards. Then you will get both the size and the design of the tiny courtyard round which one of these big dark houses is built. The central square may be perhaps ten feet every way, but the balconies that run inside it

overhang, and seem to cut away half the available space. To reach the square a man must go round many corners, down a covered–in way, and up and down two or three baffling and confused steps. "Now you will understand," say the Police, kindly, as their charge blunders, shin–first into a well–dark winding staircase, "that these are not the sort of places to visit alone." "Who wants to? Of all the disgusting, inaccessible dens—Holy Cupid, what's this?"

A glare of light on the stair–head, a clink of innumerable bangles, a rustle of much fine gauze, and the Dainty Iniquity stands revealed, blazing—literally blazing—with jewellery from head to foot. Take one of the fairest miniatures that the Delhi painters draw, and multiply it by ten; throw in one of Angelica Kaufmann's best portraits, and add anything that you can think of from Beckford to Lalla Rookh, and you will still fall short of the merits of that perfect face! For an instant, even the grim, professional gravity of the Police is relaxed in the presence of the Dainty Iniquity with the gems, who so prettily invites every one to be seated, and proffers such refreshments as she conceives the palates of the barbarians would prefer. Her maids are only one degree less gorgeous than she. Half a lakh, or fifty thousand pounds' worth—it is easier to credit the latter statement than the former—are disposed upon her little body. Each hand carries five jewelled rings which are connected by golden chains to a great jewelled boss of gold in the centre of the back of the hand. Ear–rings weighted with emeralds and pearls, diamond nose–rings, and how many other hundred articles make up the list of adornments. English furniture of a gorgeous and gimcrack kind, unlimited chandeliers, and a collection of atrocious Continental prints are scattered about the house, and on every landing squats or loafs a Bengali who can talk English with unholy fluency. The recurrence suggests—only suggests, mind—a grim possibility of the affectation of excessive virtue by day, tempered with the sort of unwholesome enjoyment after dusk—this loafing and lobbying and chattering and smoking, and unless the bottles lie, tippling, among the foul–tongued handmaidens of the Dainty Iniquity. How many men follow this double, deleterious sort of life? The Police are discreetly dumb.

"Now don't go talking about 'domiciliary visits' just because this one happens to be a pretty woman. We've *got* to know these creatures. They make the rich man and the poor spend their money; and when a man can't get money for 'em honestly, he comes under *our* notice. Now do you see? If there was any domiciliary 'visit' about it, the whole houseful would be hidden past our finding as soon as we turned up in the courtyard. We're friends—to a certain extent." And, indeed, it seemed no difficult thing to be friends to any extent with the Dainty Iniquity who was so surpassingly different from all that experience

taught of the beauty of the East. Here was the face from which a man could write *Lalla Rookhs* by the dozen, and believe every work that he wrote. Hers was the beauty that Byron sang of when he wrote—

"Remember, if you come here alone, the chances are that you'll be clubbed, or stuck, or, anyhow, mobbed. You'll understand that this part of the world is shut to Europeans—absolutely. Mind the steps, and follow on." The vision dies out in the smells and gross darkness of the night, in evil, time–rotten brickwork, and another wilderness of shut–up houses.

Follows, after another plunge into a passage of a courtyard, and up a staircase, the apparition of a Fat Vice, in whom is no sort of romance, nor beauty, but unlimited coarse humour. She too is studded with jewels, and her house is even finer than the house of the other, and more infested with the extraordinary men who speak such good English and are so deferential to the Police. The Fat Vice has been a great leader of fashion in her day, and stripped a zemindar Raja to his last acre—insomuch that he ended in the House of Correction for a theft committed for her sake. Native opinion has it that she is a "monstrous well–preserved woman." On this point, as on some others, the races will agree to differ.

The scene changes suddenly as a slide in a magic lantern. Dainty Iniquity and Fat Vice slide away on a roll of streets and alleys, each more squalid than its predecessor. We are "somewhere at the back of the Machua Bazar," well in the heart of the city. There are no houses here—nothing but acres and acres, it seems, of foul wattle–and–dab huts, any one of which would be a disgrace to a frontier village. The whole arrangement is a neatly contrived germ and fire trap, reflecting great credit upon the Calcutta Municipality.

"What happens when these pigsties catch fire?" "They're built up again," say the Police, as though this were the natural order of things. "Land is immensely valuable here." All the more reason, then, to turn several Hausmanns loose into the city, with instructions to make barracks for the population that cannot find room in the huts and sleeps in the open ways, cherishing dogs and worse, much worse, in its unwashen bosom. "Here is a licensed coffee–shop. This is where your servants go for amusement and to see nautches." There is a huge thatch shed, ingeniously ornamented with insecure kerosene lamps, and crammed with drivers, cooks, small store–keepers and the like. Never a sign of a European. Why? "Because if an Englishman messed about here, he'd get into trouble. Men don't come here unless they're drunk or have lost their way." The hack–drivers—they have the privilege of voting, have they not?—look peaceful enough as they squat on tables or crowd by the doors to watch the nautch that is going forward. Five pitiful draggle–tails are huddled together on a

bench under one of the lamps, while the sixth is squirming and shrieking before the impassive crowd. She sings of love as understood by the Oriental—the love that dries the heart and consumes the liver. In this place, the words that would look so well on paper have an evil and ghastly significance. The men stare or sup tumblers and cups of a filthy decoction, and the *kunchenee* howls with renewed vigour in the presence of the Police. Where the Dainty Iniquity was hung with gold and gems, she is trapped with pewter and glass; and where there was heavy embroidery on the Fat Vice's dress, defaced, stamped tinsel faithfully reduplicates the pattern on the tawdry robes of the *kunchenee*.

Two or three men with uneasy consciences have quietly slipped out of the coffee–shop into the mazes of the huts. The Police laugh, and those nearest in the crowd laugh applausively, as in duty bound. Perhaps the rabbits grin uneasily when the ferret lands at the bottom of the burrow and begins to clear the warren.

"The *chandoo*–shops shut up at six, so you'll have to see opium–smoking before dark some day. No, you won't, though." The detective makes for a half–opened door of a hut whence floats the fragrance of the Black Smoke. Those of the inhabitants who are able promptly clear out—they have no love for the Police—and there remain only four men lying down and one standing up. This latter has a pet mongoose coiled round his neck. He speaks English fluently. Yes, he has no fear. It was a private smoking party and—"No business to–night—show how you smoke opium." "Aha! You want to see. Very good, I show. Hiya! you"—he kicks a man on the floor—"show how opium–smoke." The kickee grunts lazily and turns on his elbow. The mongoose, always keeping to the man's neck, erects every hair of its body like an angry cat, and chatters in its owner's ear. The lamp for the opium–pipe is the only one in the room, and lights a scene as wild as anything in the witches' revel; the mongoose acting as the familiar spirit. A voice from the ground says, in tones of infinite weariness: "You take *afim*, so"—a long, long pause, and another kick from the man possessed of the devil—the mongoose. "You take *afim*?" He takes a pellet of the black, treacly stuff on the end of a knitting–needle. "And light *afim*." He plunges the pellet into the night–light, where it swells and fumes greasily. "And then you put it in your pipe." The smoking pellet is jammed into the tiny bowl of the thick, bamboo–stemmed pipe, and all speech ceases, except the unearthly chitter of the mongoose. The man on the ground is sucking at his pipe, and when the smoking pellet has ceased to smoke will be half–way to *Nibban*. "Now you go," says the man with the mongoose. "I am going smoke." The hut floor closes upon a red–lit view of huddled legs and bodies, and the man with the mongoose sinking, sinking on to his

knees, his head bowed forward, and the little hairy devil chattering on the nape of his neck.

After this the fetid night air seems almost cool, for the hut is as hot as a furnace. "Now for Colootollah. Come through the huts. There is no decoration about *this* vice."

The huts now gave place to houses very tall and spacious and very dark. But for the narrowness of the streets we might have stumbled upon Chowringhi in the dark. An hour and a half has passed, and up to this time we have not crossed our trail once. "You might knock about the city for a night and never cross the same line. Recollect Calcutta isn't one of your poky up–country cities of a lakh and a half of people." "How long does it take to know it then?" "About a lifetime, and even then some of the streets puzzle you." "How much has the head of a ward to know?" "Every house in his ward if he can, who owns it, what sort of character the inhabitants are, who are their friends, who go out and in, who loaf about the place at night, and so on and so on." "And he knows all this by night as well as by day?" "Of course. Why shouldn't he?" "No reason in the world. Only it's pitchy black just now, and I'd like to see where this alley is going to end." "Round the corner beyond that dead wall. There's a lamp there. Then you'll be able to see." A shadow flits out of a gulley and disappears. "Who's that?" "Sergeant of Police just to see where we're going in case of accidents." Another shadow staggers into the darkness. "Who's *that*?" "Soldier from the Fort or a sailor from the ships. I couldn't quite see." The Police open a shut door in a high wall, and stumble unceremoniously among a gang of women cooking their food. The floor is of beaten earth, the steps that lead into the upper stories are unspeakably grimy, and the heat is the heat of April. The women rise hastily, and the light of the bull's eye—for the Police have now lighted a lantern in regular London fashion—shows six bleared faces—one a half–native half–Chinese one, and the others Bengali. "There are no men here!" they cry. "The house is empty." Then they grin and jabber and chew *pan* and spit, and hurry up the steps into the darkness. A range of three big rooms has been knocked into one here, and there is some sort of arrangement of mats. But an average country–bred is more sumptuously accommodated in an Englishman's stable. A horse would snort at the accommodation.

"Nice sort of place, isn't it?" say the Police, genially. "This is where the sailors get robbed and drunk." "They must be blind drunk before they come." "Na—na! Na sailor men ee—yah!" chorus the women, catching at the one word they understand. "Arl gone!" The Police take no notice, but tramp down the big room with the mat loose–boxes. A woman is shivering in one of these. "What's the matter?" "Fever. Seek. Vary, *vary* seek." She huddles herself into a heap on the *charpoy* and

groans.

A tiny, pitch–black closet opens out of the long room, and into this the Police plunge. "Hullo! What's here?" Down flashes the lantern, and a white hand with black nails comes out of the gloom. Somebody is asleep or drunk in the cot. The ring of lantern light travels slowly up and down the body. "A sailor from the ships. He'll be robbed before the morning most likely." The man is sleeping like a little child, both arms thrown over his head, and he is not unhandsome. He is shoeless, and there are huge holes in his stockings. He is a pure–blooded white, and carries the flush of innocent sleep on his cheeks.

The light is turned off, and the Police depart; while the woman in the loose–box shivers, and moans that she is "seek; vary, *vary* seek."

Chapter VII

Deeper and Deeper Still - "I Built Myself a Lordly Pleasure-house, Wherein at Ease for Aye to Dwell; I Said:--'o Soul, Make Merry and Carouse. Dear Soul--for All is Well."' - --the Palace of Art.

"And where next? I don't like Colootollah." The Police and their charge are standing in the interminable waste of houses under the starlight. "To the lowest sink of all, but you wouldn't know if you were told." They lead till they come to the last circle of the Inferno—a long, quiet, winding road. "There you are; you can see for yourself."

But there is nothing to be seen. On one side are houses—gaunt and dark, naked and devoid of furniture; on the other, low, mean stalls, lighted, and with shamelessly open doors, where women stand and mutter and whisper one to another. There is a hush here, or at least the busy silence of an officer of counting–house in working hours. One look down the street is sufficient. Lead on, gentlemen of the Calcutta Police. We do not love the lines of open doors, the flaring lamps within, the glimpses of the tawdry toilet–tables adorned with little plaster dogs, glass balls from Christmas–trees, and—for religion must not be despised though women be fallen—pictures of the saints and statuettes of the Virgin. The street is a long one, and other streets, full of the same pitiful wares, branch off from it.

"Why are they so quiet? Why don't they make a row and sing and shout, and so on?" "Why should they, poor devils?" say the Police, and fall to telling tales of horror, of women decoyed and shot into this trap. Then other tales that shatter one's belief in all things and folk of good repute. "How can you Police have faith in humanity?"

"That's because you're seeing it all in a lump for the first time, and it's not nice that way. Makes a man jump rather, doesn't it? But, recollect, you've *asked* for the worst places, and you can't complain." "Who's complaining? Bring on your atrocities. Isn't that a European woman at that door?" "Yes. Mrs. D—, widow of a soldier, mother of seven children." "Nine, if you please, and good evening to you," shrills Mrs. D—, leaning against the door–post, her arms folded on her bosom. She is a rather pretty, slightly made Eurasian, and whatever shame she may have owned she has long since cast behind her. A shapeless Burmo–native trot, with high cheek–bones and mouth like a shark, calls Mrs. D— "Mem–Sahib." The word jars unspeakably. Her life is a matter between herself and her Maker, but in that she—the widow of a soldier of the Queen—has stooped to this common foulness in the face of the city, she has offended against the White race. "You're from up–country, and of course you don't understand. There are any amount of that lot in the city, say the Police." Then the

secret of the insolence of Calcutta is made plain. Small wonder the natives fail to respect the Sahib, seeing what they see and knowing what they know. In the good old days, the Honourable the Directors deported him or her who misbehaved grossly, and the white man preserved his face. He may have been a ruffian, but he was a ruffian on a large scale. He did not sink in the presence of the people. The natives are quite right to take the wall of the Sahib who has been at great pains to prove that he is of the same flesh and blood.

All this time Mrs. D— stands on the threshold of her room and looks upon the men with unabashed eyes. Mrs. D— is a lady with a story. She is not averse to telling it. "What was—ahem—the case in which you were—er—hmn—concerned, Mrs. D—?" "They said I'd poisoned my husband by putting something into his drinking water." This is interesting. "And—ah—*did* you?" "'Twasn't proved," says Mrs. D— with a laugh, a pleasant, lady–like laugh that does infinite credit to her education and upbringing. Worthy Mrs. D—! It would pay a novelist—a French one let us say—to pick you out of the stews and make you talk.

The Police move forward, into a region of Mrs. D—'s. Everywhere are the empty houses, and the babbling women in print gowns. The clocks in the city are close upon midnight, but the Police show no signs of stopping. They plunge hither and thither, like wreckers into the surf; and each plunge brings up a sample of misery, filth, and woe.

A woman—Eurasian—rises to a sitting position on a cot and blinks sleepily at the Police. Then she throws herself down with a grunt. "What's the matter with you?" "I live in Markiss Lane and"—this with intense gravity—"I'm *so* drunk." She has a rather striking gipsy–like face, but her language might be improved.

"Come along," say the Police, "we'll head back to Bentinck Street, and put you on the road to the Great Eastern." They walk long and steadily, and the talk falls on gambling hells. "You ought to see our men rush one of 'em. When we've marked a hell down, we post men at the entrances and carry it. Sometimes the Chinese bite, but as a rule they fight fair. It's a pity we hadn't a hell to show you. Let's go in here —there may be something forward." "Here" appears to be in the heart of a Chinese quarter, for the pigtails—do they ever go to bed?—are scuttling about the streets. "Never go into a Chinese place alone," say the Police, and swing open a postern gate in a strong, green door. Two Chinamen appear.

"What are we going to see?" "Japanese gir—No, we aren't, by Jove! Catch that Chinaman, *quick*." The pigtail is trying to double back across a courtyard into an inner chamber; but a large hand on his shoulder spins him round and puts him in rear of the line of advancing Englishmen, who are, be it observed, making a fair amount of noise

with their boots. A second door is thrown open, and the visitors advance into a large, square room blazing with gas. Here thirteen pigtails, deaf and blind to the outer world, are bending over a table. The captured Chinaman dodges uneasily in the rear of the procession. Five—ten—fifteen seconds pass, the Englishmen standing in the full light less than three paces from the absorbed gang who see nothing. Then the burly Superintendent brings his hand down on his thigh with a crack like a pistol–shot and shouts: "How do, John?" Follows a frantic rush of scared Celestials, almost tumbling over each other in their anxiety to get clear. One pigtail scoops up a pile of copper money, another a chinaware soup–bowl, and only a little mound of accusing cowries remains on the white matting that covers the table. In less than half a minute two facts are forcibly brought home to the visitor. First, that a pigtail is largely composed of silk, and rasps the palm of the hand as it slides through; and secondly, that the forearm of a Chinaman is surprisingly muscular and well–developed. "What's going to be done?" "Nothing. There are only three of us, and all the ringleaders would get away. We've got 'em safe any time we want to catch 'em, if this little visit doesn't make 'em shift their quarters. Hi! John. No pidgin to–night. Show how you makee play. That fat youngster there is our informer."

Half the pigtails have fled into the darkness, but the remainder assured and trebly assured that the Police really mean "no pidgin," return to the table and stand round while the croupier manipulates the cowries, the little curved slip of bamboo, and the soup–bowl. They never gamble, these innocents. They only come to look on, and smoke opium in the next room. Yet as the game progresses their eyes light up, and one by one put their money on odd or even—the number of the cowries that are covered and left uncovered by the little soup–bowl. *Mythan* is the name of the amusement, and, whatever may be its demerits, it is clean. The Police look on while their charge plays and loots a parchment–skinned horror—one of Swift's Struldburgs, strayed from Laputa—of the enormous sum of two annas. The return of this wealth, doubled, sets the loser beating his forehead against the table from sheer gratitude.

"Most immoral game this. A man might drop five whole rupees, if he began playing at sun–down and kept it up all night. Don't you ever play whist occasionally?"

"Now, we didn't bring you round to make fun of this department. A man can lose as much as ever he likes and he can fight as well, and if he loses all his money he steals to get more. A Chinaman is insane about gambling, and half his crime comes from it. It *must* be kept down. Here we are in Bentinck Street and you can be driven to the Great Eastern in a few minutes. Joss houses? Oh, yes. If you want

more horrors, Superintendent Lamb will take you round with him to–morrow afternoon at five. Good night."

The Police depart, and in a few minutes the silent respectability of Old Council House Street, with the grim Free Kirk at the end of it, is reached. All good Calcutta has gone to bed, the last tram has passed, and the peace of the night is upon the world. Would it be wise and rational to climb the spire of that kirk, and shout: "O true believers! Decency is a fraud and a sham. There is nothing clean or pure or wholesome under the stars, and we are all going to perdition together. Amen!" On second thoughts it would not; for the spire is slippery, the night is hot, and the Police have been specially careful to warn their charge that he must not be carried away by the sight of horrors that cannot be written or hinted at.

"Good morning," says the Policeman tramping the pavement in front of the Great Eastern, and he nods his head pleasantly to show that he is the representative of Law and Peace and that the city of Calcutta is safe from itself for the present.

Chapter VIII

Concerning Lucia

Time must be filled in somehow till five this afternoon, when Superintendent Lamb will reveal more horrors. Why not, the trams aiding, go to the Old Park Street Cemetery?

"You want go Park Street? No trams going Park Street. You get out *here*." Calcutta tram conductors are not polite. The car shuffles unsympathetically down the street, and the evicted is stranded in Dhurrumtollah, which may be the Hammersmith Highway of Calcutta. Providence arranged this mistake, and paved the way to a Great Discovery now published for the first time. Dhurrumtollah is full of the People of India, walking in family parties and groups and confidential couples. And the people of India are neither Hindu nor Mussulman—Jew, Ethiop, Gueber, or expatriated British. They are the Eurasians, and there are hundreds and hundreds of them in Dhurrumtollah now. There is Papa with a shining black hat fit for a counsellor of the Queen, and Mamma, whose silken dress is tight upon her portly figure, and The Brood made up of straw–hatted, olive–cheeked, sharp–eyed little boys, and leggy maidens wearing white, open–work stockings calculated to show dust. There are the young men who smoke bad cigars and carry themselves lordily—such as have incomes. There are also the young women with the beautiful eyes and the wonderful dresses which always fit so badly across the shoulders. And they carry prayer–books or baskets, because they are either going to mass or the market. Without doubt, these are the People of India. They were born in it, bred in it, and will die in it. The Englishman only comes to the country, and the natives of course were there from the first, but these people have been made here, and no one has done anything for them except talk and write about them. Yet they belong, some of them, to old and honourable families, hold houses in Sealdah, and are rich, a few of them. They all look prosperous and contented, and they chatter eternally in that curious dialect that no one has yet reduced to print. Beyond what little they please to reveal now and again in the newspapers, we know nothing about their life which touches so intimately the White on the one hand and the Black on the other. It must be interesting—more interesting than the colourless Anglo–Indian article; but who has treated of it? There was one novel once in which the second heroine was an Eurasienne. She was a strictly subordinate character, and came to a sad end. The poet of the race, Henry Derozio,—he of whom Mr. Thomas Edwards wrote a history,—was bitten with Keats and Scott and Shelley, and overlooked in his search for material things that lay

nearest to him. All this mass of humanity in Dhurrumtollah is unexploited and almost unknown. Wanted, therefore, a writer from among the Eurasians, who shall write so that men shall be pleased to read a story of Eurasian life; then outsiders will be interested in the People of India, and will admit that the race has possibilities.

A futile attempt to get to Park Street from Dhurrumtollah ends in the market—the Hogg Market men call it. Perhaps a knight of that name built it. It is not one–half as pretty as the Crawford Market, in Bombay, but …it appears to be the trysting place of Young Calcutta. The natural inclination of youth is to lie abed late, and to let the seniors do all the hard work. Why, therefore, should Pyramus, who has to be ruling account forms at ten, and Thisbe, who *cannot* be interested in the price of second–quality beef, wander, in studiously correct raiment, round and about the stalls before the sun is well clear of the earth? Pyramus carries a walking stick with imitation silver straps upon it, and there are cloth tops to his boots; but his collar has been two days worn. Thisbe crowns her dark head with a blue velvet Tam–o'–Shanter; but one of her boots lacks a button, and there is a tear in the left–hand glove. Mamma, who despises gloves, is rapidly filling a shallow basket, that the coolie–boy carries, with vegetables, potatoes, purple brinjals, and—Oh, Pyramus! Do you ever kiss Thisbe when Mamma is not by?—garlic—yea, *lusson* of the bazaar! Mamma is generous in her views on garlic. Pyramus comes round the corner of the stall looking for nobody in particular—not he—and is elaborately polite to Mamma. Somehow, he and Thisbe drift off together, and Mamma, very portly and very voluble, is left to chaffer and sort and select alone. In the name of the Sacred Unities do not, young people, retire to the meat–stalls to exchange confidences! Come up to this end, where the roses are arriving in great flat baskets, where the air is heavy with the fragrance of flowers, and the young buds and greenery are littering all the floor. They won't—they prefer talking by the dead, unromantic muttons, where there are not so many buyers. There must have been a quarrel to make up. Thisbe shakes the blue velvet Tam–o'–Shanter and says, "Oah yess!" scornfully. Pyramus answers: "No–a, no–a. Do–ant say thatt." Mamma's basket is full and she picks up Thisbe hastily. Pyramus departs. *He* never came here to do any marketing. He came to meet Thisbe, who in ten years will own a figure very much like Mamma's. May their ways be smooth before them, and after honest service of the Government, may Pyramus retire on 250 rupees per mensem, into a nice little house somewhere in Monghyr or Chunar!

From love by natural sequence to death. Where *is* the Park Street Cemetery? A hundred hack–drivers leap from their boxes and invade the market, and after a short struggle one of them uncarts his capture

in a burial–ground—a ghastly new place, close to a tramway. This is not what is wanted. The living dead are here—the people whose names are not yet altogether perished and whose tombstones are tended. "Where are the *old* dead?" "Nobody goes there," says the driver. "It is up that road." He points up a long and utterly deserted thoroughfare, running between high walls. This is the place, and the entrance to it, with its gardener waiting with one brown, battered rose for the visitor, its grilled door and its professional notices, bears a hideous likeness to the entrance of Simla churchyard. But, once inside, the sightseer stands in the heart of utter desolation—all the more forlorn for being swept up. Lower Park Street cuts a great graveyard in two. The guide–books will tell you when the place was opened and when it was closed. The eye is ready to swear that it is as old as Herculaneum and Pompeii. The tombs are small houses. It is as though we walked down the streets of a town, so tall are they and so closely do they stand—a town shrivelled by fire, and scarred by frost and siege. Men must have been afraid of their friends rising up before the due time that they weighted them with such cruel mounds of masonry. Strong man, weak woman, or somebody's "infant son aged fifteen months," for each the squat obelisk, the defaced classic temple, the cellaret of chunam, or the candlestick of brickwork—the heavy slab, the rust–eaten railings, the whopper–jawed cherubs, and the apoplectic angels. Men were rich in those days and could afford to put a hundred cubic feet of masonry into the grave of even so humble a person as "Jno. Clements, Captain of the Country Service, 1820." When the "dearly beloved" had held rank answering to that of Commissioner, the efforts are still more sumptuous and the verse…. Well, the following speaks for itself:—

> "Soft on thy tomb shall fond Remembrance shed
> The warm yet unavailing tear,
> And purple flowers that deck the honoured dead
> Shall strew the loved and honoured bier."

Failure to comply with the contract does not, let us hope, entail forfeiture of the earnest–money; or the honoured dead might be grieved. The slab is out of his tomb, and leans foolishly against it; the railings are rotted, and there are no more lasting ornaments than blisters and stains, which are the work of the weather, and not the result of the "warm yet unavailing tear."

Let us go about and moralise cheaply on the tombstones, trailing the robe of pious reflection up and down the pathways of the grave. Here is a big and stately tomb sacred to "Lucia," who died in 1776 A.D., aged 23. Here also be lichened verses which an irreverent thumb

can bring to light. Thus they wrote, when their hearts were heavy in them, one hundred and sixteen years ago:—

"What needs the emblem, what the plaintive strain,
What all the arts that sculpture e'er expressed,
To tell the treasure that these walls contain?
Let those declare it most who knew her best.

"The tender pity she would oft display
Shall be with interest at her shrine returned,
Connubial love, connubial tears repay,
And Lucia loved shall still be Lucia mourned.

"Though closed the lips, though stopped the tuneful breath,
The silent, clay–cold monitress shall teach—
In all the alarming eloquence of death
With double pathos to the heart shall preach.

"Shall teach the virtuous maid, the faithful wife,
If young and fair, that young and fair was she,
Then close the useful lesson of her life,
And tell them what she is, they soon must be."

That goes well, even after all these years, does it not? and seems to bring Lucia very near, in spite of what the later generation is pleased to call the stiltedness of the old–time verse.

Who will declare the merits of Lucia—dead in her spring before there was even a *Hickey's Gazette* to chronicle the amusements of Calcutta, and publish, with scurrilous asterisks, the *liaisons* of heads of departments? What pot–bellied East Indiaman brought the "virtuous maid" up the river, and did Lucia "make her bargain" as the cant of those times went, on the first, second, or third day after her arrival? Or did she, with the others of the batch, give a spinsters' ball as a last trial—following the custom of the country? No. She was a fair Kentish maiden, sent out, at a cost of five hundred pounds, English money, under the captain's charge, to wed the man of her choice, and *he* knew Clive well, had had dealings with Omichand, and talked to men who had lived through the terrible night in the Black Hole. He was a rich man, Lucia's battered tomb proves it, and he gave Lucia all that her heart could wish: a green–painted boat to take the air in on the river of evenings. Coffree slave–boys who could play on the French horn, and even a very elegant, neat coach with a genteel rutlan roof ornamented with flowers very highly finished, ten best polished plate glasses, ornamented with a few elegant medallions enriched with

mother–o'–pearl, that she might take her drive on the course as befitted a factor's wife. All these things he gave her. And when the convoys came up the river, and the guns thundered, and the servants of the Honourable the East India Company drank to the king's health, be sure that Lucia before all the other ladies in the Fort had her choice of the new stuffs from England and was cordially hated in consequence. Tilly Kettle painted her picture a little before she died, and the hot–blooded young writers did duel with small swords in the fort ditch for the honour of piloting her through a minuet at the Calcutta theatre or the Punch House. But Warren Hastings danced with her instead, and the writers were confounded—every man of them. She was a toast far up the river. And she walked in the evening on the bastions of Fort William, and said, "La! I protest!" It was there that she exchanged congratulations with all her friends on the 20th of October, when those who were alive gathered together to felicitate themselves on having come through another hot season; and the men—even the sober factor saw no wrong here—got most royally and Britishly drunk on Madeira that had twice rounded the Cape. But Lucia fell sick, and the doctor—he who went home after seven years with five lakhs and a half, and a corner of this vast graveyard to his account—said that it was a pukka or putrid fever, and the system required strengthening. So they fed Lucia on hot curries, and mulled wine worked up with spirits and fortified with spices, for nearly a week; at the end of which time she closed her eyes on the weary river and the Fort for ever, and a gallant, with a turn for *belles–lettres*, wept openly as men did then and had no shame of it, and composed the verses above set, and thought himself a neat hand at the pen—stap his vitals! But the factor was so grieved that he could write nothing at all—could only spend his money—and he counted his wealth by lakhs—on a sumptuous grave. A little later on he took comfort, and when the next batch came out—

But this has nothing whatever to do with the story of Lucia, the virtuous maid, the faithful wife. Her ghost went to a big Calcutta Powder Ball that very night, and looked very beautiful. I met her.

Part IV
Among the Railway Folk

Chapter I

Mar., 1888 - A Railway Settlement

Jamalpur is the headquarters of the East India Railway. This in itself is not a startling statement. The wonder begins with the exploration of Jamalpur, which is a station entirely made by, and devoted to, the use of those untiring servants of the public, the railway folk. They have towns of their own at Toondla and Assensole; a sun–dried sanitarium at Bandikui; and Howrah, Ajmir, Allahabad, Lahore, and Pindi know their colonies. But Jamalpur is unadulteratedly "Railway," and he who has nothing to do with the E. I. Railway in some shape or another feels a stranger and an interloper. Running always east and southerly, the train carries him from the torments of the northwest into the wet, woolly warmth of Bengal, where may be found the hothouse heat that has ruined the temper of the good people of Calcutta. The land is fat and greasy with good living, and the wealth of the bodies of innumerable dead things; and here—just above Mokameh—may be seen fields stretching, without stick, stone, or bush to break the view, from the railway line to the horizon.

Up–country innocents must look at the map to learn that Jamalpur is near the top left–hand corner of the big loop that the E. I. R. throws out round Bhagalpur and part of the Bara–Banki districts. Northward of Jamalpur, as near as may be, lies the Ganges and Tirhoot, and eastward an offshoot of the volcanic Rajmehal range blocks the view.

A station which has neither Judge, Commissioner, Deputy, or 'Stunt, which is devoid of law courts, *ticca–gharies*, District Superintendents of Police, and many other evidences of an over–cultured civilisation, is a curiosity. "We administer ourselves," says Jamalpur, proudly, "or we did—till we had local self–government in—and now the racket–marker administers us." This is a solemn fact. The station, which had its beginnings thirty odd years ago, used, till comparatively recent times, to control its own roads, sewage, conservancy, and the like. But, with the introduction of local self–government, it was ordained that the "inestimable boon" should be extended to a place made by, and maintained for, Europeans, and a brand–new municipality was created and nominated according to the many rules of the game. In the skirmish that ensued, the Club racket–marker fought his way to the front, secured a place on a board largely composed of Babus, and since that day Jamalpur's views on government have not been fit for publication. To understand the magnitude of the insult, one must study the city—for station, in the

strict sense of the word, it is not. Crotons, palms, mangoes, *mellingtonias*, teak, and bamboos adorn it, and the *poinsettia* and *bougainvillea*, the railway creeper and the *bignonia venusta*, make it gay with many colours. It is laid out with military precision to each house its just share of garden, its red brick path, its growth of trees, and its neat little wicket gate. Its general aspect, in spite of the Dutch formality, is that of an English village, such a thing as enterprising stage–managers put on the theatres at home. The hills have thrown a protecting arm round nearly three sides of it, and on the fourth it is bounded by what are locally known as the "sheds"; in other words, the station, offices, and workshops of the company. The E. I. R. only exists for outsiders. Its servants speak of it reverently, angrily, despitefully, or enthusiastically as "The Company"; and they never omit the big, big C. Men must have treated the Honourable the East India Company in something the same fashion ages ago. "The Company" in Jamalpur is Lord Dufferin, all the Members of Council, the Body–Guard, Sir Frederick Roberts, Mr. Westland, whose name is at the bottom of the currency notes, the Oriental Life Assurance Company, and the Bengal Government all rolled into one. At first, when a stranger enters this life, he is inclined to scoff and ask, in his ignorance, "*What* is this Company that you talk so much about?" Later on, he ceases to scoff; for the Company is a "big" thing—almost big enough to satisfy an American.

Ere beginning to describe its doings, let it be written, and repeated several times hereafter, that the E. I. R. passenger carriages, and especially the second–class, are just now horrid—being filthy and unwashen, dirty to look at, and dirty to live in. Having cast this small stone, we will examine Jamalpur. When it was laid out, in or before the Mutiny year, its designers allowed room for growth, and made the houses of one general design—some of brick, some of stone, some three, four, and six roomed, some single men's barracks and some two–storied—all for the use of the employés. King's Road, Prince's Road, Queen's Road, and Victoria Road—Jamalpur is loyal—cut the breadth of the station; and Albert Road, Church Street, and Steam Road the length of it. Neither on these roads or on any of the cool–shaded smaller ones is anything unclean or unsightly to be found. There is a dreary village in the neighbourhood which is said to make the most of any cholera that may be going, but Jamalpur itself is specklessly and spotlessly neat. From St. Mary's Church to the railway station, and from the buildings where they print daily about half a lakh of tickets, to the ringing, roaring, rattling workshops, everything has the air of having been cleaned up at ten that very morning and put under a glass case. There is a holy calm about the roads—totally unlike anything in an English manufacturing town. Wheeled

conveyances are few, because every man's bungalow is close to his work, and when the day has begun and the offices of the "Loco." and "Traffic" have soaked up their thousands of natives and hundreds of Europeans, you shall pass under the dappled shadows of the trees, hearing nothing louder than the croon of some bearer playing with a child in the verandah or the faint tinkle of a piano. This is pleasant, and produces an impression of Watteau–like refinement tempered with Arcadian simplicity. The dry, anguished howl of the "buzzer," the big steam–whistle, breaks the hush, and all Jamalpur is alive with the tramping of tiffin–seeking feet. The Company gives one hour for meals between eleven and twelve. On the stroke of noon there is another rush back to the works or the offices, and Jamalpur sleeps through the afternoon till four or half–past, and then rouses for tennis at the institute.

In the hot weather it splashes in the swimming bath, or reads, for it has a library of several thousand books. One of the most nourishing lodges in the Bengal jurisdiction—"St. George in the East"—lives at Jamalpur, and meets twice a month. Its members point out with justifiable pride that all the fittings were made by their own hands; and the lodge in its accoutrements and the energy of the craftsmen can compare with any in India. But the institute is the central gathering place, and its half–dozen tennis–courts and neatly–laid–out grounds seem to be always full. Here, if a stranger could judge, the greater part of the flirtation of Jamalpur is carried out, and here the dashing apprentice—the apprentices are the liveliest of all—learns that there are problems harder than any he studies at the night school, and that the heart of a maiden is more inscrutable than the mechanism of a locomotive. On Tuesdays and Fridays, the volunteers parade. A and B Companies, 150 strong in all, of the E. I. R. Volunteers, are stationed here with the band. Their uniform, grey with red facings, is not lovely, but they know how to shoot and drill. They have to. The "Company" makes it a condition of service that a man must be a volunteer; and volunteer in something more than name he must be, or some one will ask the reason why. Seeing that there are no regulars between Howrah and Dinapore, the "Company" does well in exacting this toll. Some of the old soldiers are wearied of drill, some of the youngsters don't like it, but—the way they entrain and detrain is worth seeing. They are as mobile a corps as can be desired, and perhaps ten or twelve years hence the Government may possibly be led to take a real interest in them and spend a few thousand rupees in providing them with real soldiers' kits—not uniform and rifle merely. Their ranks include all sorts and conditions of men—heads of the "Loco." and "Traffic," the "Company" is no respecter of rank—clerks in the "audit," boys from mercantile firms at home, fighting with the

intricacies of time, fare, and freight tables; guards who have grown grey in the service of the Company; mail and passenger drivers with nerves of cast–iron, who can shoot through a long afternoon without losing temper or flurrying; light–blue East Indians; Tyne–side men, slow of speech and uncommonly strong in the arm; lathy apprentices who have not yet "filled out"; fitters, turners, foremen, full, assistant, and sub–assistant station–masters, and a host of others. In the hands of the younger men the regulation Martini–Henri naturally goes off the line occasionally on hunting expeditions.

There is a twelve–hundred yards' range running down one side of the station, and the condition of the grass by the firing butts tells its own tale. Scattered in the ranks of the volunteers are a fair number of old soldiers, for the Company has a weakness for recruiting from the Army for its guards who may, in time, become station–masters. A good man from the Army, with his papers all correct and certificates from his commanding officer, can, after depositing twenty pounds to pay his home passage, in the event of his services being dispensed with, enter the Company's service on something less than one hundred rupees a month and rise in time to four hundred as a station–master. A railway bungalow—and they are as substantially built as the engines —will cost him more than one–ninth of the pay of his grade, and the Provident Fund provides for his latter end.

Think for a moment of the number of men that a line running from Howrah to Delhi must use, and you will realise what an enormous amount of patronage the Company holds in its hands. Naturally a father who has worked for the line expects the line to do something for the son; and the line is not backward in meeting his wishes where possible. The sons of old servants may be taken on at fifteen years of age, or thereabouts, as apprentices in the "shops," receiving twenty rupees in the first and fifty in the last year, of their indentures. Then they come on the books as full "men" on perhaps Rs. 65 a month, and the road is open to them in many ways. They may become foremen of departments on Rs. 500 a month, or drivers earning with overtime Rs. 370; or if they have been brought into the audit or the traffic, they may control innumerable Babus and draw several hundreds of rupees monthly; or, at eighteen or nineteen, they may be ticket–collectors, working up to the grade of guard, etc. Every rank of the huge, human hive has a desire to see its sons placed properly, and the native workmen, about three thousand, in the locomotive department only, are, said one man, "making a family affair of it altogether. You see all those men turning brass and looking after the machinery? They've all got relatives, and a lot of 'em own land out Monghyr–way close to us. They bring on their sons as soon as they are old enough to do anything, and the Company rather

encourages it. You see the father is in a way responsible for his son, and he'll teach him all he knows, and in that way the Company has a hold on them all. You've no notion how sharp a native is when he's working on his own hook. All the district round here, right up to Monghyr, is more or less dependent on the railway."

The Babus in the traffic department, in the stores, issue department, in all the departments where men sit through the long, long Indian day among ledgers, and check and pencil and deal in figures and items and rupees, may be counted by hundreds. Imagine the struggle among them to locate their sons in comfortable cane–bottomed chairs, in front of a big pewter inkstand and stacks of paper! The Babus make beautiful accountants, and if we could only see it, a merciful Providence has made the Babu for figures and detail. Without him, the dividends of any company would be eaten up by the expenses of English or city–bred clerks. The Babu is a great man, and, to respect him, you must see five score or so of him in a room a hundred yards long, bending over ledgers, ledgers, and yet more ledgers—silent as the Sphinx and busy as a bee. He is the lubricant of the great machinery of the Company whose ways and works cannot be dealt with in a single scrawl.

Chapter II

The Shops

The railway folk, like the army and civilian castes, have their own language and life, which an outsider cannot hope to understand. For instance, when Jamalpur refers to itself as being "on the Long Siding," a lengthy explanation is necessary before the visitor grasps the fact that the whole of the two hundred and thirty odd miles of the loop from Luckeeserai to Kanu–Junction *via* Bhagalpur is thus contemptuously treated. Jamalpur insists that it is out of the world, and makes this an excuse for being proud of itself and all its institutions. But in one thing it is badly, disgracefully provided. At a moderate estimate there must be about two hundred Europeans with their families in this place. They can, and do, get their small supplies from Calcutta, but they are dependent on the tender mercies of the bazaar for their meat, which seems to be hawked from door to door. There is a Raja who owns or has an interest in the land on which the station stands, and he is averse to cow–killing. For these reasons, Jamalpur is not too well supplied with good meat, and what it wants is a decent meat–market with cleanly controlled slaughtering arrangements. The "Company," who gives grants to the schools and builds the institute and throws the shadow of its protection all over the place, might help this scheme forward.

The heart of Jamalpur is the "shops," and here a visitor will see more things in an hour than he can understand in a year. Steam Street very appropriately leads to the forty or fifty acres that the "shops" cover, and to the busy silence of the loco. superintendent's office, where, a man must put down his name and his business on a slip of paper before he can penetrate into the Temple of Vulcan. About three thousand five hundred men are in the "shops," and, ten minutes after the day's work has begun, the assistant superintendent knows exactly how many are "in." The heads of departments—silent, heavy–handed men, captains of five hundred or more—have their names fairly printed on a board which is exactly like a pool–marker. They "star a life" when they come in, and their few names alone represent salaries to the extent of six thousand a month. They are men worth hearing deferentially. They hail from Manchester and the Clyde, and the great ironworks of the North: pleasant as cold water in a thirsty land is it to hear again the full Northumbrian burr or the long–drawn Yorkshire "aye." Under their great gravity of demeanour—a man who is in charge of a few lakhs' worth of plant cannot afford to be riotously mirthful—lurks melody and humour. They can sing like north–countrymen, and in their hours of ease go back to the speech of the

Iron countries they have left behind, when "Ab o' th' yate" and all "Ben Briarly's" shrewd wit shakes the warm air of Bengal with deep–chested laughter. Hear "Ruglan' Toon," with a chorus as true as the fall of trip–hammers, and fancy that you are back again in the smoky, rattling, ringing North!

But this is the "unofficial" side. Go forward through the gates under the mango trees, and set foot at once in sheds which have as little to do with mangoes as a locomotive with Lakshmi. The "buzzer" howls, for it is nearly tiffin time. There is a rush from every quarter of the shops, a cloud of flying natives, and a procession of more sedately pacing Englishmen, and in three short minutes you are left absolutely alone among arrested wheels and belts, pulleys, cranks, and cranes—in a silence only broken by the soft sigh of a far–away steam–valve or the cooing of pigeons. You are, by favour freely granted, at liberty to wander anywhere you please through the deserted works. Walk into a huge, brick–built, tin–roofed stable, capable of holding twenty–four locomotives under treatment, and see what must be done to the Iron Horse once in every three years if he is to do his work well. On reflection, Iron Horse is wrong. An engine is a she—as distinctly feminine as a ship or a mine. Here stands the *Echo*, her wheels off, resting on blocks, her underside machinery taken out, and her side scrawled with mysterious hieroglyphics in chalk. An enormous green–painted iron harness–rack bears her piston and eccentric rods, and a neatly painted board shows that such and such Englishmen are the fitter, assistant, and apprentice engaged in editing that *Echo*. An engine seen from the platform and an engine viewed from underneath are two very different things. The one is as unimpressive as a cart; the other as imposing as a man–of–war in the yard.

In this manner is an engine treated for navicular, laminitis, back–sinew, or whatever it is that engines most suffer from. No. 607, we will say, goes wrong at Dinapore, Assensole, Buxar, or wherever it may be, after three years' work. The place she came from is stencilled on the boiler, and the foreman examines her. Then he fills in a hospital sheet, which bears one hundred and eighty printed heads under which an engine can come into the shops. No. 607 needs repair in only one hundred and eighteen particulars, ranging from mud–hole–flanges and blower–cocks to lead–plugs, and platform brackets which have shaken loose. This certificate the foreman signs, and it is framed near the engine for the benefit of the three Europeans and the eight or nine natives who have to mend No. 607. To the ignorant the superhuman wisdom of the examiner seems only equalled by the audacity of the two men and the boy who are to undertake what is frivolously called the "job." No. 607 is in a sorely mangled condition, but 403 is much worse. She is reduced to a shell—is a very elle–

woman of an engine, bearing only her funnel, the iron frame and the saddle that supports the boiler.

Four–and–twenty engines in every stage of decomposition stand in one huge shop. A travelling crane runs overhead, and the men have hauled up one end of a bright vermilion loco. The effect is the silence of a scornful stare—just such a look as a colonel's portly wife gives through her *pince–nez* at the audacious subaltern. Engines are the "livest" things that man ever made. They glare through their spectacle–plates, they tilt their noses contemptuously, and when their insides are gone they adorn themselves with red lead, and leer like decayed beauties; and in the Jamalpur works there is no escape from them. The shops can hold fifty without pressure, and on occasion as many again. Everywhere there are engines, and everywhere brass domes lie about on the ground like huge helmets in a pantomime. The silence is the weirdest touch of all. Some sprightly soul—an apprentice be sure—has daubed in red lead on the end of an iron tool–box a caricature of some friend who is evidently a riveter. The picture has all the interest of an Egyptian cartouche, for it shows that men have been here, and that the engines do not have it all their own way.

And so, out in the open, away from the three great sheds, between and under more engines, till we strike a wilderness of lines all converging to one turn–table. Here be elephant–stalls ranged round a half–circle, and in each stall stands one engine, and each engine stares at the turn–table. A stolid and disconcerting company is this ring–of–eyes monsters; 324, 432, and 8 are shining like toys. They are ready for their turn of duty, and are as spruce as hansoms. Lacquered chocolate, picked out with black, red, and white, is their dress and delicate lemon graces the ceilings of the cabs. The driver should be a gentleman in evening dress with white kid gloves, and there should be gold–headed champagne bottles in the spick and span tenders. Huckleberry Finn says of a timber raft, "It amounted to something being captain of that raft." Thrice enviable is the man who, drawing Rs. 220 a month, is allowed to make Rs. 150 overtime out of locos Nos. 324, 432, or 8. Fifty yards beyond this gorgeous trinity are ten to twelve engines who have put in to Jamalpur to bait. They are alive, their fires are lighted, and they are swearing and purring and growling one at another as they stand alone. Here is evidently one of the newest type—No. 25, a giant who has just brought the mail in and waits to be cleaned up preparatory to going out afresh.

The tiffin hour has ended. The buzzer blows, and with a roar, a rattle, and a clang the shops take up their toil. The hubbub that followed on the Prince's kiss to the sleeping beauty was not so loud or sudden. Experience, with a foot–rule in his pocket, authority in his port, and a merry twinkle in his eye, comes up and catches Ignorance

walking gingerly round No. 25. "That's one of the best we have," says Experience, "a four–wheeled coupled bogie they call her. She's by Dobbs. She's done her hundred and fifty miles to–day; and she'll run in to Rampore Haut this afternoon; then she'll rest a day and be cleaned up. Roughly, she does her three hundred miles in the four–and–twenty hours. She's a beauty. She's out from home, but we can build our own engines—all except the wheels. We're building ten locos. now, and we've got a dozen boilers ready if you care to look at them. How long does a loco. last? That's just as may be. She will do as much as her driver lets her. Some men play the mischief with a loco. and some handle 'em properly. Our drivers prefer Hawthorne's old four–wheeled coupled engines because they give the least bother. There is one in that shed, and it's a good 'un to travel. But eighty thousand miles generally sees the gloss off an engine, and she goes into the shops to be overhauled and refitted and replaned, and a lot of things that you wouldn't understand if I told you about them. No. 1, the first loco. on the line, is running still, but very little of the original engine must be left by this time. That one there, came out in the Mutiny year. She's by Slaughter and Grunning, and she's built for speed in front of a light load. French–looking sort of thing, isn't she? That's because her cylinders are on a tilt. We used her for the Mail once, but the Mail has grown heavier and heavier, and now we use six–wheeled coupled eighteen–inch, inside cylinder, 45–ton locos. to shift thousand–ton trains. *No!* All locos. aren't alike. It isn't merely pulling a lever. The Company likes its drivers to know their locos., and a man will keep his Hawthorne for two or three years. The more mileage he gets out of her before she has to be overhauled the better man he is. It pays to let a man have his fancy engine. A man must take an interest in his loco., and that means she must belong to him. Some locos. won't do anything, even if you coax and humour them. I don't think there are any unlucky ones now, but some years ago No. 31 wasn't popular. The drivers went sick or took leave when they were told off for her. She killed her driver on the Jubbulpore line, she left the rails at Kajra, she did something or other at Rampur Haut, and Lord knows what she didn't do or try to do in other places! All the drivers fought shy of her, and in the end she disappeared. They said she was condemned, but I shouldn't wonder if the Company changed her number quietly, and changed the luck at the same time. You see, the Government Inspector comes and looks at our stock now and again, and when an engine's condemned he puts his dhobi–mark on her, and she's broken up. Well, No. 31 was condemned, but there was a whisper that they only shifted her number, and ran her out again. When the drivers didn't know, there were no accidents. I don't think we've got an unlucky one running now. Some are different from others, but there are no man–

eaters. Yes, a driver of the mail *is* somebody. He can make Rs. 370 a month if he's a covenanted man. We get a lot of our drivers in the country, and we don't import from England as much as we did. 'Stands to reason that, now there's more competition both among lines and in the labour market, the Company can't afford to be as generous as it used to be. It doesn't cheat a man though. It's this way with the drivers. A native driver gets about Rs. 20 a month, and in his way he's supposed to be good enough for branch work and shunting and such. Well, an English driver'll get from Rs. 80 to Rs. 220, and overtime. The English driver knows what the native gets, and in time they tell the driver that the native'll improve. The driver has that to think of. You see? That's competition!"

Experience returns to the engine–sheds, now full of clamour, and enlarges on the beauties of sick locomotives. The fitters and the assistants and the apprentices are hammering and punching and gauging, and otherwise technically disporting themselves round their enormous patients, and their language, as caught in snatches, is beautifully unintelligible.

But one flying sentence goes straight to the heart. It is the cry of Humanity over the task of Life, done into unrefined English. An apprentice, grimed to his eyebrows, his cloth cap well on the back of his curly head and his hands deep in his pockets, is sitting on the edge of a tool–box ruefully regarding the very much disorganised engine whose slave is he. A handsome boy, this apprentice, and well made. He whistles softly between his teeth, and his brow puckers. Then he addresses the engine, half in expostulation and half in despair, "Oh, you condemned old female dog!" He puts the sentence more crisply—much more crisply—and Ignorance chuckles sympathetically.

Ignorance also is puzzled over these engines.

Chapter III

Vulcan's Forge

In the wilderness of the railway shops—and machinery that planes and shaves, and bevels and stamps, and punches and hoists and nips—the first idea that occurs to an outsider, when he has seen the men who people the place, is that it must be the birthplace of inventions—a pasture–ground of fat patents. If a writing–man, who plays with shadows and dresses dolls that others may laugh at their antics, draws help and comfort and new methods of working old ideas from the stored shelves of a library, how, in the name of Commonsense, his god, can a doing–man, whose mind is set upon things that snatch a few moments from flying Time or put power into weak hands, refrain from going forward and adding new inventions to the hundreds among which he daily moves?

Appealed to on this subject, Experience, who had served the E. I. R. loyally for many years, held his peace. "We don't go in much for patents; but," he added, with a praiseworthy attempt to turn the conversation, "we can build you any mortal thing you like. We've got the *Bradford Leslie* steamer for the Sahibgunge ferry. Come and see the brass–work for her bows. It's in the casting–shed."

It would have been cruel to have pressed Experience further, and Ignorance, to foredate matters a little, went about to discover why Experience shied off this question, and why the men of Jamalpur had not each and all invented and patented something. He won his information in the end, but did not come from Jamalpur. *That* must be clearly understood. It was found anywhere you please between Howrah and Hoti Mardan; and here it is that all the world may admire a prudent and far–sighted Board of Directors. Once upon a time, as every one in the profession knows, two men invented the D. and O. sleeper—cast iron, of five pieces, very serviceable. The men were in the Company's employ, and their masters said: "Your brains are ours. Hand us over those sleepers." Being of pay and position, D. and O. made some sort of resistance and got a royalty or a bonus. At any rate, the Company had to pay for its sleepers. But thereafter, and the condition exists to this day, they caused it to be written in each servant's covenant, that if by chance he invented aught, his invention was to belong to the Company. Providence has mercifully arranged that no man or syndicate of men can buy the "holy spirit of man" outright without suffering in some way or another just as much as the purchase. America fully, and Germany in part, recognises this law. The E. I. Railway's breach of it is thoroughly English. They say, or it is said of them that they say, "We are afraid of our men, who belong to

us, wasting their time on trying to invent."

Is it wholly impossible, then, for men of mechanical experience and large sympathies to check the mere patent–hunter and bring forward the man with an idea? Is there no supervision in the "shops," or have the men who play tennis and billiards at the institute not a minute which they can rightly call their very own? Would it ruin the richest Company in India to lend their model–shop and their lathes to half a dozen, or, for the matter of that, half a hundred, abortive experiments? A Massachusetts organ factory, a Racine buggy shop, an Oregon lumber–yard, would laugh at the notion. An American toy–maker might swindle an employé after the invention, but he would in his own interests help the man to "see what comes of the thing." Surely a wealthy, a powerful and, as all Jamalpur bears witness, a considerate Company might cut that clause out of the covenant and await the issue. There would be quite enough jealousy between man and man, grade and grade, to keep down all but the keenest souls; and, with due respect to the steam–hammer and the rolling–mill, we have not yet made machinery perfect. The "shops" are not likely to spawn unmanageable Stephensons or grasping Brunels; but in the minor turns of mechanical thought that find concrete expressions in links, axle–boxes, joint packings, valves, and spring–stirrups something might—something would—be done were the practical prohibition removed. Will a North countryman give you anything but warm hospitality for nothing? Or if you claim from him overtime service as a right, will he work zealously? "Onything but t' brass," is his motto, and his ideas are his "brass."

Gentlemen in authority, if this should meet your august eyes, spare it a minute's thought, and, clearing away the floridity, get to the heart of the mistake and see if it cannot be rationally put right. Above all, remember that Jamalpur supplied no information. It was as mute as an oyster. There is no one within your jurisdiction to—ahem —"drop upon."

Let us, after this excursion into the offices, return to the shops and only ask Experience such questions as he can without disloyalty answer.

"We used once," says he, leading to the foundry, "to sell our old rails and import new ones. Even when we used 'em for roof beams and so on, we had more than we knew what to do with. Now we have got rolling–mills, and we use the rails to make tie–bars for the D. and O. sleepers and all sorts of things. We turn out five hundred D. and O. sleepers a day. Altogether, we use about seventy–five tons of our own iron a month here. Iron in Calcutta costs about five–eight a hundredweight; ours costs between three–four and three–eight, and on that item alone we save three thousand a month. Don't ask me how

many miles of rails we own. There are fifteen hundred miles of line, and you can make your own calculation. All those things like babies' graves, down in that shed, are the moulds for the D. and O. sleepers. We test them by dropping three hundredweight and three hundred quarters of iron on top of them from a height of seven feet, or eleven sometimes. They don't often smash. We have a notion here that our iron is as good as the Home stuff."

A sleek, white, and brindled pariah thrusts himself into the conversation. His house appears to be on the warm ashes of the bolt–maker. This is a horrible machine, which chews red–hot iron bars and spits them out perfect bolts. Its manners are disgusting, and it gobbles over its food.

"Hi, Jack!" says Experience, stroking the interloper, "you've been trying to break your leg again. That's the dog of the works. At least he makes believe that the works belong to him. He'll follow any one of us about the shops as far as the gate, but never a step further. You can see he's in first–class condition. The boys give him his ticket, and, one of these days, he'll try to get on to the Company's books as a regular worker. He's too clever to live." Jack heads the procession as far as the walls of the rolling–shed and then returns to his machinery room. He waddles with fatness and despises strangers.

"How would you like to be hot–potted there?" says Experience, who has read and who is enthusiastic over *She*, as he points to the great furnaces whence the slag is being dragged out by hooks. "Here is the old material going into the furnace in that big iron bucket. Look at the scraps of iron. There's an old D. and O. sleeper, there's a lot of clips from a cylinder, there's a lot of snipped–up rails, there's a driving–wheel block, there's an old hook, and a sprinkling of boiler–plates and rivets."

The bucket is tipped into the furnace with a thunderous roar and the slag below pours forth more quickly. "An engine," says Experience, reflectively, "can run over herself so to say. After she's broken up she is made into sleepers for the line. You'll see how she's broken up later." A few paces further on, semi–nude demons are capering over strips of glowing hot iron which are put into a mill as rails and emerge as thin, shapely tie–bars. The natives wear rough sandals and some pretence of aprons, but the greater part of them is "all face." "As I said before," says Experience, "a native's cuteness when he's working on ticket is something startling. Beyond occasionally hanging on to a red–hot bar too long and so letting their pincers be drawn through the mills, these men take precious good care not to go wrong. Our machinery is fenced and guard–railed as much as possible, and these men don't get caught up by the belting. In the first place, they're careful—the father warns the son and so on—and in the second,

there's nothing about 'em for the belting to catch on unless the man shoves his hand in. Oh, a native's no fool! He knows that it doesn't do to be foolish when he's dealing with a crane or a driving–wheel. You're looking at all those chopped rails? We make our iron as they blend baccy. We mix up all sorts to get the required quality. Those rails have just been chopped by this tobacco–cutter thing." Experience bends down and sets a vicious–looking, parrot–headed beam to work. There is a quiver—a snap—and a dull smash and a heavy rail is nipped in two like a stick of barley–sugar.

Elsewhere, a bull–nosed hydraulic cutter is rail–cutting as if it enjoyed the fun. In another shed stand the steam–hammers; the unemployed ones murmuring and muttering to themselves, as is the uncanny custom of all steam–souled machinery. Experience, with his hand on a long lever, makes one of the monsters perform: and though Ignorance knows that a man designed and men do continually build steam–hammers, the effect is as though Experience were maddening a chained beast. The massive block slides down the guides, only to pause hungrily an inch above the anvil, or restlessly throb through a foot and a half of space, each motion being controlled by an almost imperceptible handling of the levers. "When these things are newly overhauled, you can regulate your blow to within an eighth of an inch," says Experience. "We had a foreman here once who could work 'em beautifully. He had the touch. One day a visitor, no end of a swell in a tall, white hat, came round the works, and our foreman borrowed the hat and brought the hammer down just enough to press the nap and no more. 'How wonderful!' said the visitor, putting his hand carelessly upon this lever rod here." Experience suits the action to the word and the hammer thunders on the anvil. "Well, you can guess for yourself. Next minute there wasn't enough left of that tall, white hat to make a postage–stamp of. Steam–hammers aren't things to play with. Now we'll go over to the stores … "

Whatever apparent disorder there might have been in the works, the store department is as clean as a new pin, and stupefying in its naval order. Copper plates, bar, angle, and rod iron, duplicate cranks and slide bars, the piston rods of the *Bradford Leslie* steamer, engine grease, files, and hammer–heads—every conceivable article, from leather laces of beltings to head–lamps, necessary for the due and proper working of a long line, is stocked, stacked, piled, and put away in appropriate compartments. In the midst of it all, neck deep in ledgers and indent forms, stands the many–handed Babu, the steam of the engine whose power extends from Howrah to Ghaziabad.

The Company does everything, and knows everything. The gallant apprentice may be a wild youth with an earnest desire to go occasionally "upon the bend." But three times a week, between 7 and

8 P.M., he must attend the night–school and sit at the feet of M. Bonnaud, who teaches him mechanics and statics so thoroughly that even the awful Government Inspector is pleased. And when there is no night–school the Company will by no means wash its hands of its men out of working–hours. No man can be violently restrained from going to the bad if he insists upon it, but in the service of the Company a man has every warning; his escapades are known, and a judiciously arranged transfer sometimes keeps a good fellow clear of the down–grade. No one can flatter himself that in the multitude he is overlooked, or believe that between 4 P.M. and 9 A.M. he is at liberty to misdemean himself. Sooner or later, but generally sooner, his goings–on are known, and he is reminded that "Britons never shall be slaves"—to things that destroy good work as well as souls. Maybe the Company acts only in its own interest, but the result is good.

Best and prettiest of the many good and pretty things in Jamalpur is the institute of a Saturday when the Volunteer Band is playing and the tennis courts are full and the babydom of Jamalpur—fat, sturdy children—frolic round the band–stand. The people dance—but big as the institute is, it is getting too small for their dances—they act, they play billiards, they study their newspapers, they play cards and everything else, and they flirt in a sumptuous building, and in the hot weather the gallant apprentice ducks his friend in the big swimming–bath. Decidedly the railway folk make their lives pleasant.

Let us go down southward to the big Giridih collieries and see the coal that feeds the furnace that smelts the iron that makes the sleeper that bears the loco. that pulls the carriage that holds the freight that comes from the country that is made richer by the Great Company Badahur, the East Indian Railway.

Part V
The Giridih Coal-fields

Chapter I

On the Surface

Southward, always southward and easterly, runs the Calcutta Mail from Luckeeserai, till she reaches Madapur in the Sonthal Parganas. From Madapur a train, largely made up of coal–trucks, heads westward into the Hazaribagh district and toward Giridih. A week would not have exhausted "Jamalpur and its environs," as the guide–books say. But since time drives and man must e'en be driven, the weird, echoing bund in the hills above Jamalpur, where the owls hoot at night and hyenas come down to laugh over the grave of "Quilem Roberts, who died from the effects of an encounter with a tiger near this place, A.D. 1864," goes undescribed. Nor is it possible to deal with Monghyr, the headquarters of the district, where one sees for the first time the age of Old Bengal in the sleepy, creepy station, built in a time–eaten fort, which runs out into the Ganges, and is full of quaint houses, with fat–legged balustrades on the roofs. Pensioners certainly, and probably a score of ghosts, live in Monghyr. All the country seems haunted. Is there not at Pir Bahar a lonely house on a bluff, the grave of a young lady, who, thirty years ago, rode her horse down the cliff and perished? Has not Monghyr a haunted house in which tradition says sceptics have seen much more than they could account for? And is it not notorious throughout the countryside that the seven miles of road between Jamalpur and Monghyr are nightly paraded by tramping battalions of spectres, phantoms of an old–time army massacred, who knows how long ago? The common voice attests all these things, and an eerie cemetery packed with blackened, lichened, candle–extinguisher tomb–stones persuades the listener to believe all that he hears. Bengal is second—or third is it?—in order of seniority among the Provinces, and like an old nurse, she tells many witch–tales.

But ghosts have nothing to do with collieries, and that ever–present "Company," the E. I. R., has more or less made Giridih—principally more. "Before the E. I. R. came," say the people, "we had one meal a day. Now we have two." Stomachs do not tell fibs, whatever mouths may say. That "Company," in the course of business, throws about five lakhs a year into the Hazaribagh district in the form of wages alone, and Giridih Bazaar has to supply the wants of twelve thousand men, women, and children. But we have now the authority of a number of high–souled and intelligent native prints that the Sahib of all grades spends his time in "sucking the blood out of the country," and "flying to England to spend his ill–gotten gains."

Giridih is perfectly mad—quite insane! Geologically, "the country is in the metamorphic higher grounds that rise out of the alluvial flats

of Lower Bengal between the Osri and the Barakar rivers." Translated, this sentence means that you can twist your ankle on pieces of pure white, pinky, and yellowish granite, slip over weather–worn sandstone, grievously cut your boots over flakes of trap, and throw hornblende pebbles at the dogs. Never was such a place for stone–throwing as Giridih. The general aspect of the country is falsely park–like, because it swells and sinks in a score of grass–covered undulations, and is adorned with plantation–like jungle. There are low hills on every side, and twelve miles away bearing south the blue bulk of the holy hill of Parasnath, greatest of the Jain Tirthankars, overlooks the world. In Bengal they consider four thousand five hundred feet good enough for a Dagshai or Kasauli, and once upon a time they tried to put troops on Parasnath. There was a scarcity of water, and Thomas of those days found the silence and seclusion prey upon his spirits. Since twenty years, therefore, Parasnath has been abandoned by Her Majesty's Army.

As to Giridih itself, the last few miles of train bring up the reek of the "Black Country." Memory depends on smell. A noseless man is devoid of sentiment, just as a noseless woman, in this country, must be devoid of honour. That first breath of the coal should be the breath of the murky, clouded tract between Yeadon and Dale—or Barnsley, rough and hospitable Barnsley—or Dewsbury and Batley and the Derby Canal on a Sunday afternoon when the wheels are still and the young men and maidens walk stolidly in pairs. Unfortunately, it is nothing more than Giridih—seven thousand miles away from Home and blessed with a warm and genial sunshine, soon to turn into something very much worse. The insanity of the place is visible at the station door. A G. B. T. cart once married a bathing–machine, and they called the child *tum–tum*. You who in flannel and Cawnpore harness drive bamboo–carts about up–country roads, remember that a Giridih *tum–tum* is painfully pushed by four men, and must be entered crawling on all–fours, head first. So strange are the ways of Bengal!

They drive mad horses in Giridih—animals that become hysterical as soon as the dusk falls and the countryside blazes with the fires of the great coke ovens. If you expostulate tearfully, they produce another horse, a raw, red fiend whose ear has to be screwed round and round, and round and round, before she will by any manner of means consent to start. The roads carry neat little eighteen–inch trenches at their sides, admirably adapted to hold the flying wheel. Skirling about this savage land in the dark, the white population beguile the time by rapturously recounting past accidents, insisting throughout on the super–equine "steadiness" of their cattle. Deep and broad and wide is their jovial hospitality; but somebody—the Tirhoot planters for choice—ought to start a mission to teach the men of

Giridih what to drive. They know *how*, or they would be severally and separately and many times dead, but they do not, they do not indeed, know that animals who stand on one hind leg and beckon with all the rest, or try to pigstick in harness, are not trap–horses worthy of endearing names, but things to be pole–axed. Their feelings are hurt when you say this. "Sit tight," say the men of Giridih; "we're insured! We can't be hurt."

And now with grey hairs, dry mouth, and chattering teeth to the collieries. The E. I. R. estate, bought or leased in perpetuity from the Serampore Raja, may be about four miles long and between one and two miles across. It is in two pieces, the Serampore field being separated from the Karharbari (or Kurhurballi or Kabarbari) field by the property of the Bengal Coal Company. The Raneegunge Coal Association lies to the east of all other workings. So we have three companies at work on about eleven square miles of land.

There is no such thing as getting a full view of the whole place. A short walk over a grassy down gives on to an outcrop of very dirty sandstone, which in the excessive innocence of his heart the visitor naturally takes to be the coal lying neatly on the surface. Up to this sandstone the path seems to be made of crushed sugar, so white and shiny is the quartz. Over the brow of the down comes in sight the old familiar pit–head wheel, spinning for the dear life, and the eye loses itself in a maze of pumping sheds, red–tiled, mud–walled miners' huts, dotted all over the landscape, and railway lines that run on every kind of gradient. There are lines that dip into valleys and disappear round the shoulders of slopes, and lines that career on the tops of rises and disappear over the brow of the slopes. Along these lines whistle and pant metre–gauge engines, some with trucks at their tail, and others rattling back to the pit–bank with the absurd air of a boy late for school that an unemployed engine always assumes. There are six engines in all, and as it is easiest to walk along the lines one sees a good deal of them. They bear not altogether unfamiliar names. Here, for instance, passes the "Cockburn" whistling down a grade with thirty tons of coal at her heels; while the "Whitly" and the "Olpherts" are waiting for their complement of trucks. Now a Mr. T. F. Cockburn was superintendent of these mines nearly thirty years ago, in the days before the chord–lines from Kanu to Luckeeserai were built, and all the coal was carted to the latter place; and surely Mr. Olpherts was an engineer who helped to think out a new sleeper. What may these things mean?

"Apotheosis of the Manager," is the reply. "Christen the engines after the managers. You'll find Cockburn, Dunn, Whitly, Abbott, Olpherts, and Saise, knocking about the place. Sounds funny, doesn't it? Doesn't sound so funny, when one of these idiots does his best to

derail Saise, though, by putting a line down anyhow. Look at that line! Laid out in knots—by Jove!" To the unprofessional eye the rails seem all correct; but there must be something wrong, because "one of those idiots" is asked why in the name of all he considers sacred he does not ram the ballast properly.

"What would happen if you threw an engine off the line?" "Can't say that I know exactly. You see, our business is to keep them *on*, and we do that. Here's rather a curiosity. You see that pointsman! They say he's an old mutineer, and when he relaxes he boasts of the Sahibs he has killed. He's glad enough to eat the Company's salt now." Such a withered old face was the face of the pointsman at No. 11 point! The information suggested a host of questions, and the answers were these: "You won't be able to understand till you've been down into a mine. We work our men in two ways: some by direct payment—under our own hand, and some by contractors. The contractor undertakes to deliver us the coal, supplying his own men, tools, and props. He's responsible for the safety of his men, and of course the Company knows and sees his work. Just fancy, among these five thousand people, what sort of effect the news of an accident would produce! It would go all through the Sonthal Parganas. We have any amount of Sonthals besides Mahometans and Hindus of every possible caste, down to those Musahers who eat pig. They don't require much administering in the civilian sense of the word. On Sundays, as a rule, if any man has had his daughter eloped with, or anything of that kind, he generally comes up to the manager's bungalow to get the matter put straight. If a man is disabled through accident he knows that as long as he's in the hospital he gets full wages, and the Company pays for the food of any of his women–folk who come to look after him. *One*, of course; not the whole clan. That makes our service popular with the people. Don't you believe that a native is a fool. You can train him to everything except responsibility. There's a rule in the workings that if there is any dangerous work—we haven't choke–damp; I will show you when we get down—no gang must work without an Englishman to look after them. A native wouldn't be wise enough to understand what the danger was, or where it came in. Even if he did, he'd shirk the responsibility. We can't afford to risk a single life. All our output is just as much as the Company want—about a thousand tons per working day. Three hundred thousand in the year. We could turn out more? Yes—a little. Well, yes, twice as much. I won't go on, because you wouldn't believe me. There's the coal under us, and we work it at any depth from following up an outcrop down to six hundred feet. That is our deepest shaft. We have no necessity to go deeper. At home the mines are sometimes fifteen hundred feet down. Well, the thickness of this coal here varies from anything you please to

anything you please. There's enough of it to last your time and one or two hundred years longer. Perhaps even longer than that. Look at that stuff. That's big coal from the pit."

It was aristocratic–looking coal, just like the picked lumps that are stacked in baskets of coal agencies at home with the printed legend atop "only 23*s* a ton." But there was no picking in this case. The great piled banks were all "equal to sample," and beyond them lay piles of small, broken, "smithy" coal. "The Company doesn't sell to the public. This small, broken coal is an exception. That is sold, but the big stuff is for the engines and the shops. It doesn't cost much to get out, as you say; but our men can earn as much as twelve rupees a month. Very often when they've earned enough to go on with they retire from the concern till they've spent their money and then come on again. It's piece–work and they are improvident. If some of them only lived like other natives they would have enough to buy land and cows with. When there's a press of work they make a good deal by overtime, but they don't seem to keep it. You should see Giridih Bazaar on a Sunday if you want to know where the money goes. About ten thousand rupees change hands once a week there. If you want to get at the number of people who are indirectly dependent or profit by the E. I. R. you'll have to conduct a census of your own. After Sunday is over the men generally lie off on Monday and take it easy on Tuesday. Then they work hard for the next four days and make it up. Of course there's nothing in the wide world to prevent a man from resigning and going away to wherever he came from—behind those hills if he's a Sonthal. He loses his employment, that's all. But they have their own point of honour. A man hates to be told by his friends that he has been guilty of shirking. And now we'll go to breakfast. You shall be 'pitted' to–morrow to any depth you like."

Chapter II

In the Depths

"Pitted to any extent you please." The only difficulty was for Joseph to choose his pit. Giridih was full of them. There was an arch in the side of a little hill, a blackened brick arch leading into thick night. A stationary engine was hauling a procession of coal–laden trucks—"tubs" is the technical word—out of its depths. The tubs were neither pretty nor clean. "We are going down in those when they are emptied. Put on your helmet and *keep* it on, and keep your head down."

There is nothing mirth–provoking in going down a coal–mine—even though it be only a shallow incline running to one hundred and forty feet vertical below the earth. "Get into the tub and lie down. Hang it, no! This is not a railway carriage: you can't see the country out of the windows. Lie *down* in the dust and don't lift your head. Let her go!"

The tubs strain on the wire rope and slide down fourteen hundred feet of incline, at first through a chastened gloom, and then through darkness. An absurd sentence from a trial report rings in the head: "About this time prisoner expressed a desire for the consolations of religion." A hand with a reeking flare–lamp hangs over the edge of the tub, and there is a glimpse of a blackened hat near it, for those accustomed to the pits have a merry trick of going down sitting or crouching on the coupling of the rear tub. The noise is deafening, and the roof is very close indeed. The tubs bump, and the occupant crouches lovingly in the coal dust. What would happen if the train went off the line? The desire for the "consolations of religion" grows keener and keener as the air grows closer and closer. The tubs stop in darkness spangled by the light of the flare–lamps which many black devils carry. Underneath and on both sides is the greasy blackness of the coal, and, above, a roof of grey sandstone, smooth as the flow of a river at evening. "Now, remember that if you don't keep your hat on, you'll get your head broken, because you will forget to stoop. If you hear any tubs coming up behind you step off to one side. There's a tramway under your feet: be careful not to trip over it."

The miner has a gait as peculiarly his own as Tommy's measured pace or the bluejacket's roll. Big men who slouch in the light of day become almost things of beauty underground. Their foot is on their native heather; and the slouch is a very necessary act of homage to the great earth, which if a man observe not, he shall without doubt have his hat—bless the man who invented pith hats!—grievously cut.

The road turns and winds and the roof becomes lower, but those

accursed tubs still rattle by on the tramways. The roof throws back their noises, and when all the place is full of a grumbling and a growling, how under earth is one to know whence danger will turn up next? The air brings to the unacclimatised a singing in the ears, a hotness of the eyeballs, and a jumping of the heart. "That's because the pressure here is different from the pressure up above. It'll wear off in a minute. *We* don't notice it. Wait till you get down a four–hundred–foot pit. *Then* your ears will begin to sing, if you like."

Most people know the One Night of each hot weather—that still, clouded night just before the Rains break, when there seems to be no more breathable air under the bowl of the pitiless skies, and all the weight of the silent, dark house lies on the chest of the sleep–hunter. This is the feeling in a coal–mine—only more so—much more so, for the darkness is the "gross darkness of the inner sepulchre." It is hard to see which is the black coal and which the passage driven through it. From far away, down the side galleries, comes the regular beat of the pick—thick and muffled as the beat of the labouring heart. "Six men to a gang, and they aren't allowed to work alone. They make six–foot drives through the coal—two and sometimes three men working together. The rest clear away the stuff and load it into the tubs. We have no props in this gallery because we have a roof as good as a ceiling. The coal lies under the sandstone here. It's beautiful sandstone." It *was* beautiful sandstone—as hard as a billiard table and devoid of any nasty little bumps and jags.

There was a roaring down one road—the roaring of infernal fires. This is not a pleasant thing to hear in the dark. It is too suggestive. "That's our ventilating shaft. Can't you feel the air getting brisker? Come and look."

Imagine a great iron–bound crate of burning coal, hanging over a gulf of darkness faintly showing the brickwork of the base of a chimney. "We're at the bottom of the shaft. That fire makes a draught that sucks up the foul air from the bottom of the pit. There's another down–draw shaft in another part of the mine where the clean air comes in. We aren't going to set the mines on fire. There's an earth and brick floor at the bottom of the pit; the crate hangs over. It isn't so deep as you think." Then a devil—a naked devil—came in with a pitchfork and fed the spouting flames. This was perfectly in keeping with the landscape.

More trucks, more muffled noises, more darkness made visible, and more devils—male and female—coming out of darkness and vanishing. Then a picture to be remembered. A great Hall of Eblis, twenty feet from inky–black floor to grey roof, upheld by huge pillars of shining coal, and filled with flitting and passing devils. On a shattered pillar near the roof stood a naked man, his flesh olive–

coloured in the light of the lamps, hewing down a mass of coal that still clove to the roof. Behind him was the wall of darkness, and when the lamps shifted he disappeared like a ghost. The devils were shouting directions, and the man howled in reply, resting on his pick and wiping the sweat from his brow. When he smote the coal crushed and slid and rumbled from the darkness into the darkness, and the devils cried *Shabash!* The man stood erect like a bronze statue, he twisted and bent himself like a Japanese grotesque, and anon threw himself on his side after the manner of the dying gladiator. Then spoke the still small voice of fact: "A first–class workman if he would only stick to it. But as soon as he makes a little money he lies off and spends it. That's the last of a pillar that we've knocked out. See here. These pillars of coal are square, about thirty feet each way. As you can see, we make the pillar first by cutting out all the coal between. Then we drive two square tunnels, about seven feet wide, through and across the pillar, propping it with balks. There's one fresh cut."

Two tunnels crossing at right angles had been driven through a pillar which in its under–cut condition seemed like the rough draft of a statue for an elephant. "When the pillar stands only on four legs we chip away one leg at a time from a square to an hour–glass shape, and then either the whole of the pillar crashes down from the roof or else a quarter or a half. If the coal lies against the sandstones it carries away clear, but in some places it brings down stone and rubbish with it. The chipped–away legs of the pillars are called stooks."

"Who has to make the last cut that breaks a leg through?"

"Oh! Englishmen of sorts. We can't trust natives for the job unless it's very easy. The natives take kindly to the pillar–work though. They are paid just as much for their coal as though they had hewed it out of the solid. Of course we take very good care to see that the roof doesn't come in on us. You would never understand how and why we prop our roofs with those piles of sleepers. Anyway, you can see that we cannot take out a whole line of pillars. We work 'em *en echelon*, and those big beams you see running from floor to roof are our indicators. They show when the roof is going to give. Oh! dear no, there's no dramatic effect about it. No splash, you know. Our roofs give plenty of warning by cracking and then collapse slowly. The parts of the work that we have cleared out and allowed to fall in are called goafs. You're on the edge of a goaf now. All that darkness there marks the limit of the mine. We have worked that out piece–meal, and the props are gone and the place is down. The roof of any pillar–working is tested every morning by tapping—pretty hard tapping."

"Hi yi! yi!" shout all the devils in chorus, and the Hall of Eblis is full of rolling sound. The olive man has brought down an avalanche of coal. "It is a sight to see the whole of one of the pillars come away.

They make an awful noise. It would startle you out of your wits. But there's not an atom of risk."

("Not an atom of risk." Oh, genial and courteous host, when you turned up next day blacker than any sweep that ever swept, with a neat, half–inch gash on your forehead—won by cutting a "stook" and getting caught by a bounding coal–knob—how long and earnestly did you endeavour to show that "stook–cutting" was an employment as harmless and unexciting as wool–samplering!)

"Our ways are rather primitive, but they're cheap, and safe as houses. Doms and Bauris, Kols and Beldars, don't understand refinements in mining. They'd startle an English pit where there was fire–damp. Do you know it's a solemn fact that if you drop a Davy lamp or snatch it quickly you can blow a whole English pit inside out with all the miners? Good for us that we don't know what fire–damp is here. We can use flare–lamps."

After the first feeling of awe and wonder is worn out, a mine becomes monotonous. There is only the humming, palpitating darkness, the rumble of the tubs, and the endless procession of galleries to arrest the attention. And one pit to the uninitiated is as like to another as two peas. Tell a miner this and he laughs—slowly and softly. To him the pits have each distinct personalities, and each must be dealt with differently.

Chapter III

The Perils of the Pits

An engineer, who has built a bridge, can strike you nearly dead with professional facts; the captain of a seventy–horse–power Ganges river–steamer can, in one hour, tell legends of the Sandheads and the James and Mary shoal sufficient to fill half a *Pioneer*, but a couple of days spent on, above, and in a coal–mine yields more mixed information than two engineers and three captains. It is hopeless to pretend to understand it all.

When your host says, "Ah, such an one is a thundering good fault–reader!" you smile hazily, and by way of keeping up the conversation, adventure on the statement that fault–reading and palmistry are very popular amusements. Then men explain.

Every one knows that coal–strata, in common with women, horses, and official superiors, have "faults" caused by some colic of the earth in the days when things were settling into their places. A coal–seam is suddenly sliced off as a pencil is cut through with one slanting blow of the penknife, and one–half is either pushed up or pushed down any number of feet. The miners work the seam till they come to this break–off, and then call for an expert to "read the fault." It is sometimes very hard to discover whether the sliced–off seam has gone up or down. Theoretically, the end of the broken piece should show the direction. Practically its indications are not always clear. Then a good "fault–reader," who must more than know geology, is a useful man, and is much prized; for the Giridih fields are full of faults and "dykes." Tongues of what was once molten lava thrust themselves sheer into the coal, and the disgusted miner finds that for about twenty feet on each side of the tongue all coal has been burnt away.

The head of the mine is supposed to foresee these things and more. He can tell you, without looking at the map, what is the geological formation of any thousand square miles of India; he knows as much about brickwork and the building of houses, arches, and shafts as an average P. W. D. man; he has not only to know the intestines of a pumping or winding engine, but must be able to take them to pieces with his own hands, indicate on the spot such parts as need repair, and make drawings of anything that requires renewal; he knows how to lay out and build railways with a grade of one in twenty–seven; he has to carry, in his head all the signals and points between and over which his locomotive engines work; he must be an electrician capable of controlling the apparatus that fires the dynamite charges in the pits, and must thoroughly understand boring operations with thousand–foot drills. He must know by name, at least, one

thousand of the men on the works, and must fluently speak the vernaculars of the low castes. If he has Sonthali, which is more elaborate than Greek, so much the better for him. He must know how to handle men of all grades, and, while holding himself aloof, must possess sufficient grip of the men's private lives to be able to see at once the merits of a charge of attempted abduction preferred by a clucking, croaking Kol against a fluent English–speaking Brahmin. For he is literally the Light of Justice, and to him the injured husband and the wrathful father look for redress. He must be on the spot and take all responsibility when any specially risky job is under way in the pit, and he can claim no single hour of the day or the night for his own. From eight in the morning till one in the afternoon he is coated with coal–dust and oil. From one till eight in the evening he has office work. After eight o'clock he is free to attend to anything that he may be wanted for.

This is a soberly drawn picture of a life that Sahibs on the mines actually enjoy. They are spared all private socio–official worry, for the Company, in its mixture of State and private interest, is as perfectly cold–blooded and devoid of bias as any great Department of the Empire. If certain things be done, well and good. If certain things be not done the defaulter goes, and his place is filled by another. The conditions of service are graven on stone. There may be generosity; there undoubtedly is justice, but above all, there is freedom within broad limits. No irrepressible shareholder cripples the executive arm with suggestions and restrictions, and no private piques turn men's blood to gall within them. They work like horses and are happy.

When he can snatch a free hour, the grimy, sweating, cardigan–jacketed, ammunition–booted, pick–bearing ruffian turns into a well–kept English gentleman, who plays a good game of billiards, and has a batch of new books from England every week. The change is sudden, but in Giridih nothing is startling. It is right and natural that a man should be alternately Valentine and Orson, specially Orson. It is right and natural to drive—always behind a mad horse—away and away towards the lonely hills till the flaming coke ovens become glow–worms on the dark horizon, and in the wilderness to find a lovely English maiden teaching squat, filthy Sonthal girls how to become Christians. Nothing is strange in Giridih, and the stories of the pits, the raffle of conversation that a man picks up as he passes, are quite in keeping with the place. Thanks to the law, which enacts that an Englishman must look after the native miners, and if any one be killed must explain satisfactorily that the accident was not due to preventable causes, the death–roll is kept astoundingly low. In one "bad" half–year, six men out of the five thousand were killed, in another four, and in another none at all. As has been said before, a big

accident would scare off the workers, for, in spite of the age of the mines—nearly thirty years—the hereditary pitman has not yet been evolved. But to small accidents the men are orientally apathetic. Read of a death among the five thousand:—

A gang has been ordered to cut clay for the luting of the coke furnaces. The clay is piled in a huge bank in the open sunlight. A coolie hacks and hacks till he has hewn out a small cave with twenty foot of clay above him. Why should he trouble to climb up the bank and bring down the eave of the cave? It is easier to cut in. The Sirdar of the gang is watching round the shoulder of the bank. The coolie cuts lazily as he stands. Sunday is very near, and he will get gloriously drunk in Giridih Bazaar with his week's earnings. He digs his own grave stroke by stroke, for he has not sense enough to see that undercut clay is dangerous. He is a Sonthal from the hills. There is a smash and a dull thud, and his grave has shut down upon him in an avalanche of heavy–caked clay.

The Sirdar calls to the Babu of the Ovens, and with the promptitude of his race the Babu loses his head. He runs puffily, without giving orders, anywhere, everywhere. Finally he runs to the Sahib's house. The Sahib is at the other end of the collieries. He runs back. The Sahib has gone home to wash. Then his indiscretion strikes him. He should have sent runners—fleet–footed boys from the coal–screening gangs. He sends them and they fly. One catches the Sahib just changed after his bath. "There is a man dead at such a place"—he gasps, omitting to say whether it is a surface or a pit accident. On goes the grimy pit–kit, and in three minutes the Sahib's dogcart is flying to the place indicated.

They have dug out the Sonthal. His head is smashed in, spine and breastbone are broken, and the gang–Sirdar, bowing double, throws the blame of the accident on the poor, shapeless, battered dead. "I had warned him, but he would not listen! *Twice* I warned him! These men are witnesses."

The Babu is shaking like a jelly. "Oh, sar, I have never seen a man killed before! Look at that eye, sar! I should have sent runners. I ran everywhere! I ran to your house. You were not in. I was running for hours. It was not my fault! It was the fault of the gang–Sirdar." He wrings his hands and gurgles. The best of accountants, but the poorest of coroners is he. No need to ask how the accident happened. No need to listen to the Sirdar and his "witnesses." The Sonthal had been a fool, but it was the Sirdar's business to protect him against his own folly. "Has he any people here?"

"Yes, his *rukni*,—his kept–woman,—and his sister's brother–in–law. His home is far–off."

The sister's brother–in–law breaks through the crowd howling for

vengeance on the Sirdar. He will send for the police, he will have the price of his brother's blood full tale. The windmill arms and the angry eyes fall, for the Sahib is making the report of the death.

"Will the Government give me *pensin*? I am his wife," a woman clamours, stamping her pewter–ankleted feet. "He was killed in your service. Where is his *pensin*? I am his wife."

"You lie! You're his *rukni*. Keep quiet! Go! The pension comes to *us*."

The sister's brother–in–law is not a refined man, but the *rukni* is his match. They are silenced. The Sahib takes the report, and the body is borne away. Before to–morrow's sun rises the gang–Sirdar may find himself a simple "surface–coolie," earning nine *pice* a day; and in a week some Sonthal woman behind the hills may discover that she is entitled to draw monthly great wealth from the coffers of the Sirkar. But this will not happen if the sister's brother–in–law can prevent it. He goes off swearing at the *rukni*.

In the meantime, what have the rest of the dead man's gang been doing? They have, if you please, abating not one stroke, dug out all the clay, and would have it verified. They have seen their comrade die. He is dead. *Bus!*[17] Will the Sirdar take the tale of clay? And yet, were twenty men to be crushed by their own carelessness in the pit, these same impassive workers would scatter like panic–stricken horses.

Turning from this sketch, let us set in order a few stories of the pits. In some of the mines the coal is blasted out by the dynamite which is fired by electricity from a battery on the surface. Two men place the charges, and then signal to be drawn up in the cage which hangs in the pit–eye. Once two natives were intrusted with the job. They performed their parts beautifully till the end, when the vaster idiot of the two scrambled into the cage, gave signal, and was hauled up before his friend could follow.

Thirty or forty yards up the shaft all possible danger for those in the cage was over, and the charge was accordingly exploded. Then it occurred to the man in the cage that his friend stood a very good chance of being, by this time, riven to pieces and choked.

But the friend was wise in his generation. He had missed the cage, but found a coal–tub—one of the little iron trucks—and turning this upside down, crawled into it. When the charge went off, his shelter was battered in so much, that men had to hack him out, for the tub had made, as it were, a tinned, sardine of its occupant. He was absolutely unhurt, but for his feelings. On reaching the pit–bank his first words were, "I do not desire to go down to the pit with *that* man any more." His wish had been already gratified, for "that man" had fled. Later on, the story goes, when "that man" found that the guilt of

murder was not at his door, he returned, and was made a mere surface–coolie, and his brothers jeered at him as they passed to their better–paid occupation.

Occasionally there are mild cyclones in the pits. An old working, perhaps a mile away, will collapse: a whole gallery sinking bodily. Then the displaced air rushes through the inhabited mine, and, to quote their own expression, blows the pitmen about "like dry leaves." Few things are more amusing than the spectacle of a burly Tyneside foreman who, failing to dodge round a corner in time, is "put down" by the wind, sitting–fashion, on a knobby lump of coal.

But most impressive of all is a tale they tell of a fire in a pit many years ago. The coal caught light. They had to send earth and bricks down the shaft and build great dams across the galleries to choke the fire. Imagine the scene, a few hundred feet underground, with the air growing hotter and hotter each moment, and the carbonic acid gas trickling through the dams. After a time the rough dams gaped, and the gas poured in afresh, and the Englishmen went down and leeped the cracks between roof and dam–sill with anything they could get. Coolies fainted, and had to be taken away, but no one died, and behind the first dams they built great masonry ones, and bested that fire; though for a long time afterwards, whenever they pumped water into it, the steam would puff out from crevices in the ground above.

It is a queer life that they lead, these men of the coal–fields, and a "big" life to boot. To describe one–half of their labours would need a week at the least, and would be incomplete then. "If you want to see anything," they say, "you should go over to the Baragunda copper–mines; you should look at the Barakar ironworks; you should see our boring operations five miles away; you should see how we sink pits; you should, above all, see Giridih Bazaar on a Sunday. Why, you haven't seen anything. There's no end of a Sonthal Mission hereabouts. All the little dev—dears have gone on a picnic. Wait till they come back, and see 'em learning to read."

Alas! one cannot wait. At the most one can but thrust an impertinent pen skin–deep into matters only properly understood by specialists.

notes

Примечания

1

A seer is about two pounds.

Stud–bred, *i.e.* bred at the Indian Government studs.

casual: half–finished.

something like *parchesi*.

crocodiles.

native bankers.

Gipsy traders.

8

The crupper.

grain–dealer's.

10

A sacred herb of the Hindus.

hired carriage.

woman.

messenger.

14

C.O.D.

15

Say $100,000.

16

Imported Australian horse.

17

Enough.